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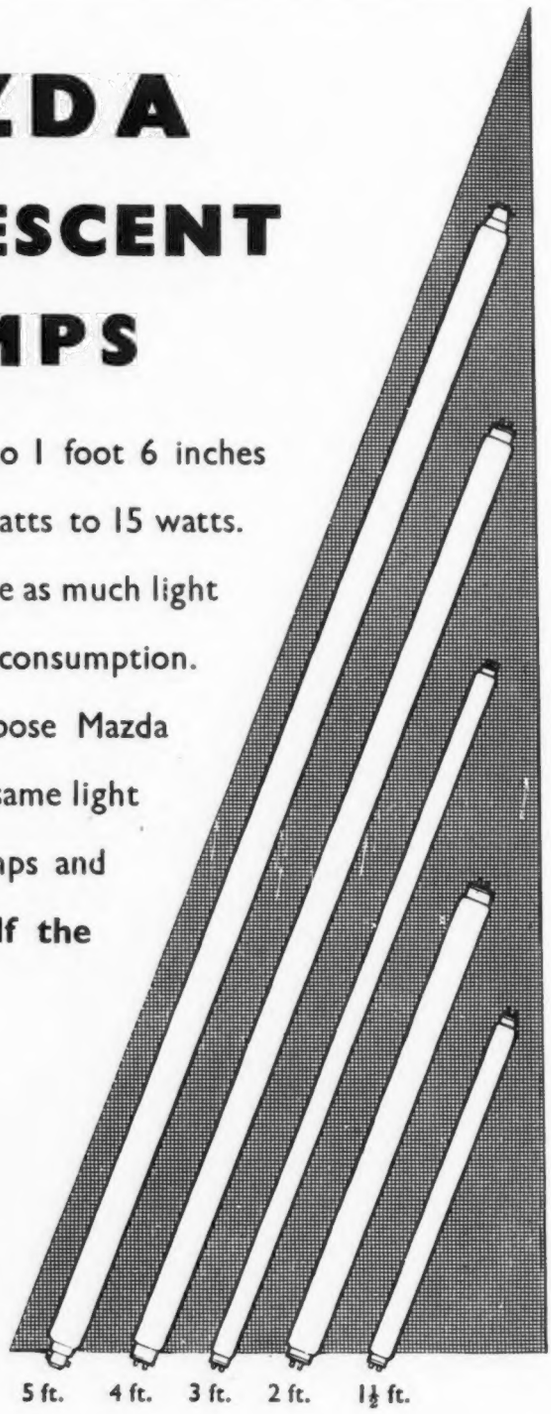

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Edited by DOUGLAS JERROLD

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SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE LYNSKEY TRIBUNAL

THE more scandalous aspects of the contemporary scene, as revealed by the evidence given before Mr. Justice Lynskey's tribunal, are best forgotten. Those concerned in them have retired from public life and there is no need to disturb their retirement with any further displays of moral indignation. What is urgently necessary is to reflect on the political and constitutional lessons to be learnt from this sorry and sordid affair. The first concerns the calibre of the men appointed to high public offices. Under our constitution the Prime Minister has a dual function. He is the leader of a political party on whose consistent support in parliament the existence of the government depends. He is at the same time the chief of the King's ministers and responsible to the Sovereign for the efficient conduct of the King's government. Throughout the whole of parliamentary history this dual responsibility has created difficult, and sometimes embarrassing, personal problems. Persons in high favour with an important section of the party in office, or persons representing important interests, may have expectations of high office for which they may well be unsuited. The Socialist party have no monopoly of incompetent or unsuitable but highly backed candidates for office. Broadly speaking, however, the doctrine that "the King's government must be carried on", by which, in our unwritten constitution, is implied that it must be carried on not only with efficiency and integrity but also with dignity, has been accepted and acted upon by all parties. Can this really be said to be the case to-day? That it is the heartfelt wish of the Prime Minister that it should be so can be readily admitted, but have the leaders of either of the great parties really faced the political and constitutional problems of the new age?

THESE problems have arisen because of the coincidence of a whole series of novelties. Firstly, we live in a world at war. There is no more chance of peace breaking out in Europe or Asia to-day than there was of a world war breaking out between 1815 and 1900. In other words, there is no chance at all. That is something wholly new in modern European history; not even the years between 1933 and 1939 provide a parallel. Secondly, and quite independently of

the great increase in the responsibility of governments imposed by the world situation, we have deliberately embarked on a vast extension of government activities in industry, agriculture and commerce, and on a vast extension of their pre-existing responsibilities in education, public health and social insurance. Thirdly, our society is simultaneously undergoing a social revolution which has, not only as its consequence but also, to a great extent, as its aim, the destruction of private heritable wealth, the abolition of a leisured class and a dramatic, if not deliberate, reduction in the economic status of the middle classes. We have to look at the state of affairs partially, but only partially, revealed by the Lynskey Tribunal much more as the inevitable consequence of these concurrent happenings than as the accidental and therefore non-recurrent consequence of the personal shortcomings of individuals.

IT has long been the unwritten convention that in time of war it is necessary to depart from the constitutional custom whereby the personnel of the government is drawn from those members of Parliament who belong to the party having a majority in the House of Commons. This war-time convention grew up from the need to ensure the maximum of *political* support for a war administration. The convention was extended by Mr. Lloyd George in 1916, when it became apparent that a modern war administration had to assume responsibilities in the sphere of industry, agriculture and finance which could not be discharged with maximum efficiency if the choice of ministers was confined to existing members of Parliament, even when party ties could be wholly disregarded. Yet it is obvious, as a matter of history, that there were far greater reserves of talent in the ranks of the politicians in 1916 than there were in 1939. By 1939 the effects of the social revolution of our times had already made themselves felt. For an entire generation high taxation and penal death duties had imposed on almost all men, of all parties and classes, the necessity of earning their living and acquiring a competence before going into public life or, alternatively, of treating politics as a part-time occupation.

The effect of this on the Socialist party has been manifestly more grave than on the Conservative party. The business of government is a fine art, only learnt by practice informed by wide experience. Nothing else, as Plato discovered more than two thousand years ago, is really an effective substitute. Nevertheless, the management of industrial enterprises or of agricultural estates or a wide experience of commerce and finance is a not inadequate training for the business of government. The same cannot be said of teaching and lecturing, writing and clerking, nor can a lifetime spent in the offices of a Trade Union provide a relevant training for most ministerial appointments. Yet thirty-two per cent of the present Socialist Members in the House of Commons are, or were, Trade Union officials, while there are no fewer than forty-nine teachers and lecturers, thirty-one journalists and thirty clerks and secretaries. Less than ten per cent of the Socialist members in the House of Commons have even managerial experience in industry or commerce. It is in these circumstances, and for these reasons, that the classical question, Who shall control the controllers?, so urgently demands an answer. It is clear, also

from the Government action on the Tribunal report, that very great inroads have had to be made on the constitutional doctrine of ministerial responsibility, presumably because Mr. Wilson could not be easily replaced. This emphasizes the reality of the present difficulties. They will be intensified in the next Parliament when the membership of the House of Commons will be reduced to six hundred and fifteen and when no party can expect to have anything like the present great majority.

So far, moreover, from seeking to reduce the detailed and intricate executive and administrative responsibilities of government, the Socialist party are clearly going to ask for a mandate to increase them still further. Who is going to discharge these responsibilities? The clerks, the secretaries, the journalists, the lecturers and the trade union officials, presumably. Here lies the real problem and here lies the reason why the Government refuse, and must refuse, to accept any responsibility in Parliament for the industries which they have removed from effective private control to what is now not even held out to be effective public control. There is, in fact, no one to control the controllers. And it is now evident that in practice the same situation is to be accepted, and perhaps even insisted on, in the old departments, for it is being suggested in responsible quarters that junior ministers should not in future be allowed to over-ride the permanent officials on their own responsibility.

THIS is no party question. Misguided as was the intention, and fantastically inopportune as was the time chosen, to nationalize so many basic undertakings, the decision only intensified a problem which already existed. If Mr. Winston Churchill's national administration, able to call on the best brains of all parties had, nevertheless, to go outside the political field to fill half a dozen or more of the key positions, how can a one-party administration hope, without doing the same, to wrestle with the infinitely more complex problems which face a government to-day? It is sometimes forgotten in this connection that the problems of a war administration, though more urgent, are less complex than those of a peace time administration in critical times. The day-to-day conduct of a war is in professional not political hands. There is an almost total devolution of executive responsibility. The strategic direction is in the hands of the Chief of Staffs committee. In peace time, under our present arrangements, the politicians must shoulder the whole burden. In so far as they are unwilling or incompetent to do so there is a triple loss—of effective planning, of effective supervision, and of democratic control.

There is little if any doubt that we have to-day reached just this stage and reached it at a singularly unfortunate time, when the country is in the gravest economic position, when we live under the instant threat of war, and the vast new responsibilities so recklessly assumed by the state are still ill-defined and under-organized and the several nationalized undertakings still in a state of confusion. The huge losses in the nationalized industries and the need for Supplementary Estimates on a scale quite without precedent in peace time, provide evidence quite as conclusive

as any given before the Tribunal of governmental incompetence and administrative disorganization on an alarming scale.

IT would be most unwise for Conservatives to treat this as a purely party question. With their great reserve of administrative talent and of men with experience in the management and direction of important undertakings, the Conservative party are clearly likely to provide the country with a more competent, as well as with a more dignified, administration. Nevertheless, even if we assume that the Conservative party will get back into office at the next election, substantial constitutional changes are necessary to meet the wide variety of new conditions. The economic pressure on the old political classes is still increasing and nothing that the Conservative party can do, even if returned to office, can substantially lighten it. The responsibilities of government, immensely enlarged by nationalization, cannot be at all quickly reduced. Foreign affairs and defence will continue to demand (and from a Conservative administration will, we may expect, receive) the almost constant attention of many of its leading members. We venture to think that the risk of a breakdown in the machinery of government will, in the circumstances, not be removed even if the Socialists lose the next election. Moreover, not even the most pig-headed Conservative would wish that his party should, if returned, remain permanently in office. The constitutional problem must, therefore, be faced.

LET it be said at once that there is no sovereign remedy, but for two, at least, of the necessary reforms blue prints are already available. These are House of Lords reform and the reorganization of the Government departments along the broad lines indicated in the Haldane report. The relevance of House of Lords reform is twofold. It is absurd that the already narrowing circle of those able to devote a lifetime to service in the House of Commons should be further contracted by forbidding English peers from sitting or speaking in the Lower House. This may well mean that some of the ablest men otherwise available are debarred from the office for which they are best qualified. But there is another and more important argument in favour of reform. The schemes generally favoured provide for strengthening the Upper House by the admission of a number of non-hereditary Lords of Parliament. This will provide regular and constitutional machinery for including in the administration, as a matter of regular practice, qualified persons who are neither hereditary peers nor elected Members of the House of Commons.

At first glance, the proposal may seem unlikely to be popular with the professional politicians, who may see their chances of high office diminished. All proposals for constitutional reform must, however, be looked at in the light of their long-term effect. To make public service outside the House of Commons an alternative path to public office, will, in practice, not only heighten the efficiency of all governments but widen and deepen the general interest both in parties and

policies. It will also greatly strengthen, in the long run, the representative character of the House of Commons as it will remove from the arena the fairly large number of those who enter the House of Commons because it is to-day the only path to office but who really lack the time to attend both to their professions and their constituencies.

THE Haldane report raised wide and contentious issues, chiefly because of the proposal to group the departments on a functional basis under a number of super-ministers—finance, trade and commerce, justice, social services, external relations, defence, supply, and so forth. Since the report was issued, however, it has been found necessary in practice to do precisely this on many separate occasions. The results, it is true, have seldom, except in the case of Mr. Winston Churchill's tenure of office of Minister of Defence, been successful: Mr. Winston Churchill's Ministry of Defence, moreover, was not really an exception to the rule because Mr. Winston Churchill was also Prime Minister. The reason for the normal failure has been that ministers with roving commissions to deal with, e.g., unemployment or over-all planning, have lacked the necessary machinery and have come up every time against the doctrine of ministerial responsibility. You cannot co-ordinate the work and policy of a number of ministers each of whom is individually responsible to Parliament for the work of his department. The Haldane report clearly envisaged neither mere co-ordination nor direct subordination, but the separation of functions along the lines, broadly, of what is now known as planning, on the one hand, and the execution of the plan on the other. The highly successful working of the war-time machinery of the Chief of Staffs Committee shows that the principle is sound. A modern revival of the Haldane scheme would inevitably take this machinery as its model. It has the over-riding advantages of allowing for the introduction of non-political experts functioning at the highest level without weakening either Cabinet control of policy or the political control of the executive.

Finally, this scheme possesses the over-riding advantage of reducing the numbers of the Cabinet and enabling the smaller Cabinet to maintain effective control over departmental policies and ministers. It would further enable a rigid doctrine of ministerial responsibility to be re-established. Departmental ministers no longer responsible for the policy of their departments, but only for its efficient execution, would have once more, as in the last century, to accept full individual responsibility for the executive work of their department, just as the Cabinet as a whole had, and should have again, to accept full joint responsibility for all matters of policy.

IT is being said that, whatever the politicians may wish, the next election will be fought on the cost of living. The cost of living cannot come down until there is a fall in world commodity prices or a substantial reduction in government expenditure. It is more than doubtful whether, so long as we keep to bulk buying and long term contracts, we shall get the benefit of a fall in commodity prices if it

takes place. As for a reduction in government expenditure, this can be achieved only by drastic administrative reforms at home, by the development of our imperial resources, and by the re-establishment of peace in Europe and Asia—a long term prospect if ever there was one. Nevertheless, these three facts have an important bearing on the electoral prospects of the Conservative party because they are fairly widely realized. There is a general feeling that taxation is higher and rationing stricter than would be necessary if the government were more efficient; there is an even more widespread feeling that our foreign policy consists too largely of angry speeches and too little of effective measures for the organization and defence of the West, without which the threat of war must remain. Finally, as the emigration figures prove, there is a more general interest in the Dominions and Colonies than there was before the war. It is when the country feels that it needs stricter financial control, more competent administration and a stronger foreign and imperial policy that it turns to the Conservative party. But they may not do so unless the party makes its intentions clear. It needs to declare its policy in these matters. It is quite certain that no other party has the ability or the experience necessary to carry out any broad reform of the machinery of government, nor could a Socialist government, however, modest its programme, spare the time. The Socialist party will, however, if it wins the next election, return committed to a full legislative programme and the acceptance by the state of a variety of new obligations. The electorate must be brought to realize without further delay that, unless we reform our financial and administrative machinery, any further extension of government activities must lead to a breakdown in government and a second 1931 crisis, from which recovery may well prove impossible.

THE "trials" of religious leaders in Hungary and Bulgaria must be regarded first and foremost as expressing the determination of the Cominform to drive religion out of public life and, in particular, out of the educational field. It is not surprising, therefore, that there has been no overwhelming expression of sympathy for the victims of these "trials" from the avowed secularists who so powerfully influence left wing politics in this country. These naïve survivors of Victorian rationalism, itself only a discredited relic of the eighteenth century, regard a church school with a distaste at least as great as Mr. Stalin, although they are fortunately not in a position to make their distaste effective in civilized countries. We should make a great mistake, however, if we were over-encouraged by the lip service paid, with marked reluctance, to Communist intolerance in the matter of free speech. Freedom requires not the right to speak but the right to act. That freedom, particularly in the matter of education, is increasingly challenged in this country. The little nobodies who spawn, at our expense, in all the political gutters are already hinting that it is theirs to determine not only what, and how much, we shall eat and drink, but what our children shall be taught, and by whom, and for how long. When the attack on the free schools begins, we shall face an issue in this country potentially quite as grave as that which Cardinal Mindszenty faced in Hungary. We can only hope that the challenge will be met with equal courage and with more success.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL OF THE EXECUTIVE

By DAVID MAXWELL FYFE

THE strict doctrine of the separation of powers has never existed in England. During the nineteenth century we grew accustomed to the idea of a certain balance of powers, a certain proportionate division of powers between the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. The charge is now made that the Executive has got the bit between its teeth and can gallop away without regard to its Parliamentry master. It is difficult for anyone who has read the brilliant case for the prosecution made by Dr. C. K. Allen in *Law and Orders* to deny that he has proved that the Executive is now the law-making body both in respect of Acts of Parliament and subsidiary legislation. At least three traceable causes have contributed to this position. In the first place, the changes of the industrial revolution and the social reforms—initial, but none the less striking—of the nineteenth century started the trend by which the state took more and more into its province. Secondly, in the last seventy-five years, the party system has hardened so that criticism, independent of the party line, has become more and more difficult in regard to controversial bills. Thirdly, two world wars in a generation forced our democracy to find a complete organization for total war, and left two difficulties. Unwinding is always more difficult than winding up in an emotional state of war-time enthusiasm. Further, the temptation to take the quick short cuts so necessary in war, continues in time of peace.

No one who views the probable development of politics dispassionately can hope that the first and second of those causes will disappear. I, myself, believe that there will have to be a change of emphasis during the next few years if we are going to have a healthy nation. The emphasis must be on economy rather than expenditure, on incentive and opportunity rather than equality, on efficiency and the standard of production as the condition precedent to a standard of living. Nevertheless, even if one accepts the view that it is the duty of the state to create conditions in which free men can live a free life and not to concern itself with owning, managing, directing, and snooping, the very creation of these conditions means that the sphere of activity of the state is very large. A strong policy at the centre and freedom at the circumference leaves a great deal for the policy to cover.

EQUALLY, there is little possibility of the breaking down of the party system as we know it. The administrative failure of the Socialist Government and the arrival of every evil prophesied with regard to a regimented society means that the preservation of free enterprise and private initiative will rally their supporters with the vigour of those who see ruin in the continuance of the opposing policy. It is therefore necessary to consider current parliamentary practice on the basis that a strong party system will continue. Ideally, British Parliamentary procedure depends on a certain independence in the committee stage of a bill. In the debate on second reading the House approves the general principle. In committee it should adapt the bill laid before it to its own conception of the needs and individual problems of constituents. It is one of the few good points of Coalitions that the loosening of party discipline produces really invigorating committee stages. Writing as one who made between one and two hundred speeches on the bills containing the social policy of the Coalition Government in the last two years of the war, I look back with pride, although I did not entirely relish it at the time, to the meticulous examination of complicated bills which the House gave. Apart from Coalitions the greater independence of

Conservative constituencies and the greater objectivity of the Conservative mind produces a greater readiness to criticize the bills of its own government than is found in other parties. All parties, however, share the difficulty which I have expressed with regard to controversial bills. It is a big thing to divide the House against your own party, and even in standing committee upstairs, a defeat of the Government leaves considerable rancour in the breast of the minister concerned. Moreover, a defeat in standing committee can easily be put right by a Government amendment on Report stage. One must therefore face it that in a controversial bill whose principle is approved by the party in power, the chance of control in the sense of improvement in the House of Commons is very slight indeed. It is not impossible. In the Transport Bill, for example, our marshalling of the arguments against the restriction on "C" Licences produced the dropping of that obnoxious provision. Minor improvements can be secured, but in the main, second class policy points remain as inviolate as first class policy points.

There is no need to enlarge on the much graver dangers that are involved in an unscrupulous use for party purposes of the guillotine procedure. The fact that a third of a bill is not discussed at all in the House of Commons speaks loudly for itself. Even more sinister is the tone of Government Back Bench Speakers that it is a good thing for speeches by the Opposition to be limited and their right of discussion abridged.

In sharp distinction to this, non-controversial bills such as the Criminal Justice Bill are approached in an entirely different spirit and amendments are debated irrespective of party divisions. This field is not to be lightly dismissed but of necessity it does not include the most important measures of the session.

THE other aspect of House of Commons control which must never be ignored is that the House remains a barometer of ministerial reputations. It is an interesting fact that although the present Government has only lost one bye-election no fewer than twenty-three ministers have gone out of office. There is always of course the danger that an inefficient minister can retrieve himself by a good piece of party tub-thumping, but it is remarkable how often he comes up against some administrative snag or some difficulty in putting across his departmental legislation and passes on to the Back Benches with as little noise as if a pin had dropped. This intangible aspect of the control by a great debating assembly is none the less real because it is difficult for those who have not lived in it for a long time to realize, and it must be given a large credit on the side of parliamentary control.

THE other great intrusion of the Executive into legislation is by subsidiary legislation by ministerial regulations. This is no modern innovation but of course it has increased enormously in recent times. The famous Statute of Proclamations of Henry VIII gave the King in Council power to issue proclamations which were to have the same force as Acts of Parliament. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that unlike most modern administrative powers such proclamations were subject to, *inter alia*, the common law and "any lawful customs of the realm". It would be startling to consider what effect such a provision would have on many of the powers of the Executive if it were included in modern statutes. In its modern guise subsidiary legislation was largely a nineteenth century product. Maitland described the position in his *Constitutional History* when he said: "We are becoming a much governed nation, governed by all manner of councils and boards and officers, central and local, high and low, exercising the powers which have been committed to them by modern statutes." During the nineteenth century, however, the trend towards delegation was generally approved. Lord Thring, in his *Practical Legislation* published in 1877 wrote words which have a Morrisonian ring: "The adoption of the system of confining the attention of Parliament to material provisions only, and leaving the details to be settled departmentally is probably the only mode in which parliamentary government

can as respects its legislative functions be satisfactorily carried on." The difficulty which rounded statements of this kind always leave untouched is what are "material provisions" and what are "details".

THIS problem remains to exercise the minds of those who are anxious to take a balanced and moderate view of this important question. The disregard by Professor Dicey of this contingency of modern political practice is universally recognized as a classic instance of how a theory can run away with a great mind. It is impossible here to recall and discuss all the justifications that have been given for delegated legislation and it is probably convenient to go straight to the report of the Donoughmore Committee which dealt with the reasons for delegation under the headings of "Unforseen contingencies", "Flexibility" and "Opportunity for Experiment". Before considering this, it is important to get one distinction, that between minor matters of administration which it is convenient to delegate to the Executive and which cannot possibly be harmful, and the more substantial matters bearing on policy or considerable discretion which it is imperative to watch most closely.

WE may take as an example from recent history the National Insurance Act introduced by the present Government to implement some of the suggestions in the Beveridge Report. In the draft Regulations of 1948 for the collection of contributions (sec.2(1)) the Minister is given powers to direct the occasion and manner in which insurance cards shall be obtained. Here is an example of delegation to which there could be no possible objection. It would be a waste of Parliamentary time and a misuse of Parliamentary procedure to expect Parliament to decide such an unimportant detail. On the other hand, by the draft Extension of Unemployment Benefit sections 2 and 3, it is provided that the local tribunal may "recommend" the payment of unemployment benefit after the normal insurance period has expired, and the tribunal shall, in making any regulations, have regard to the particular circumstances of the applicant *and* to "any general directions issued . . . by the Minister for the guidance of local tribunals". This sounds innocuous. Indeed, I have chosen it because it is a typical, rather than a glaring example. But it could mean that the Minister would be able to grant or withhold unemployment benefit for certain classes of persons, or persons in particular localities, entirely at his pleasure. I am not here concerned with the rights or wrongs of this but, surely, it is exactly the kind of power which must be strictly watched.

On the subject of unforeseen contingencies it is certainly true that much of our case-law bears melancholy testimony to omissions in statutes. But there could be no proper law-making by Parliament, if Parliament ceased to try to foresee the contingencies of its legislation. Unforeseen measures of importance which arise later should be dealt with by subsequent statutes—such as the recent changes in the composition of the Coal Board. This heading as that of "flexibility" should be confined to minor matters. The example of obtaining insurance cards is a good example of flexibility properly used. The advice by the Minister to tribunals administering unemployment benefit is an example of "flexibility" which certainly comes near the limit. In general, it may be said that a law cannot be both certain and flexible. In major provisions, certainty is the more important quality. The heading: "opportunity for experiment" must not be an excuse for ill-thought-out legislation. If you nationalize the coal mines without adequate thought about problems of administration, as Mr. Shinwell admitted, then the need to experiment arises in an unfortunate form. On the other hand, in the Criminal Justice Bill it is provided that should it appear desirable to raise the minimum age from seventeen to eighteen at which an offender may be sent to prison by a court of summary jurisdiction, this may be done by Order in Council. This is a legitimate application of flexibility and opportunity for experiment.

IT must not be thought that the process of subsidiary legislation has been allowed to progress without action in the Commons.

In the Conservative party there has always been a strong body of Members who have devoted special attention to the presence in the Acts of Parliament of powers of making regulations and they have never failed to make Ministers of all parties produce their justification of the existence of such powers. Further, their pressure caused a notable step towards better Parliamentary control of delegated legislation to be taken by the Coalition Government in 1944. A Select Committee was set up to scrutinize every statutory rule or order with a view to determining whether the special attention of the House should be drawn to it on any of the following grounds:—

i. That it imposes a charge on the public revenue.
ii. That challenge in the Courts is excluded.
iii. That it appears to make some unusual or unexpected use of powers conferred by statutes.
iv. That there appears to have been unjustifiable delay in the publication of it.
v. That for any special reason its form or purport calls for elucidation.

This Committee functions regularly and has proved of great value. In addition, the Statutory Instrument Act 1946, cleared away some of the lack of order which surrounded the making of regulations and repealed the Rules Publication Act of 1893.

IN spite, however, of these improvements, there remain two difficulties. In the first place regulations beget children in the form of orders, grandchildren in the form of directions, and even great grandchildren in the form of licences and permits. Not all orders, and few directions are statutory instruments requiring or permitting discussion in Parliament as such.

This brings one to the second difficulty, namely, that it is only regulations which are subject to what is known as an affirmative resolution that are discussed in time provided by the Government. The more usual form is to have regulations subject to a negative resolution. In other words, they remain in force unless within forty days of their making members put down a "Prayer" and carry the annulment of the regulations. A Prayer is exempted business—i.e., can be taken at any hour of the night—but only comes on at the end of Government business. This means that the mover of the Prayer must secure not only his supporters but forty friends who will remain until the early hours of the morning in order to secure that the Governemnt, by withdrawing all their supporters from the Chamber, may not have the House counted out. Although there are examples when Prayers have rattled ministers and secured the withdrawal of the offending regulations, in most cases it is difficult at that time of night to make an effective protest in a very thin House—from which most of the prominent members have departed. Further, it will be realized that on a Prayer it is impossible to amend the regulation and therefore the Government have always available to them the answer that the good will fall with the bad.

WHAT, then, is the remedy for this particular aspect of excessive power in the Executive? It is essential to remember that the King's Government must be carried on, and if ministers are to do their departmental work their opportunities must not be ham-strung by petty-fogging harassing. For this reason I do not think that the suggestion that all regulations should be referred to a Standing Committee with power to amend should be adopted. I think, however, that on the Prayer the House should take power to refer any regulations which seem to require further attention to a Standing Committee which will have the power to make amendments. If this procedure were used on suitable occasions in both Houses I believe that greater care would be taken in drafting the regulations, and ministers would be more ready to withdraw regulations and make amendments which seemed to fit the general view. Further, I think the time for "praying" should be extended to sixty days.

Apart from that, the next Conservative Government should adopt the practice that what is in fact left to the Executive for

subsidiary legislation is not a matter of substantive legislative principle. It would be impossible to secure the adoption of such practice from the present Socialist Government. The only hope is to get it adopted by their successors and demonstrate its necessity and rightness.

AS I have endeavoured to show, however, the question of subsidiary legislation is only a part of a wider problem and I believe that the wider problem will not be solved until a reformed second Chamber adopts a wider scope in its revising activities. Conservatives have always objected to the reduction of the period of delay which a Second Chamber can enforce to the derisory period suggested by the present Government for two reasons. The first and most important is that public opinion must be given time to crystalize on legislative issues which it has obviously not previously considered. The second, however, which I have urged in the debates on the Parliament Bill on both occasions, is that a Second Chamber would not be listened to on secondary points of policy (and powers of making regulations would come under this head), unless it had the power to enforce a serious delay, in the event of its views not being met. I, myself, believe that if a reform in composition, on the lines indicated in the White Paper of the Conference between Party Leaders were brought into effect, such a Second Chamber would have the accepted authority to deal with the difficulties in improving bills, and assist immensely in the control of subsidiary legislation, so that general Parliamentary control would be greatly increased. It must be remembered that action in the House of Lords inevitably brings corresponding action in the House of Commons when the Lords' amendments are brought back for discussion.

To sum up, my view is that although in a post-war period it is necessary that a Government should have, and put into effect, a strong policy, nevertheless, the balance has shifted so far that Parliament as a legislative body has lost much of its power. Unless we find a procedure to correct this difficulty we are within appreciable distance of seeing a rubber stamping Reichstag substituted for the greatest instrument of individual liberty and engine of discussion that the world has ever seen.

THE UNDERWORLD REVISITED

By an M.P. recently returned from a visit to Hell.

A GREAT deal of nonsense has been written about Hell by people who have never been there. I was lucky to be a member of a Parliamentary delegation, representing all parties, which was invited down by the Satanic Government during the recent recess. We went with open minds and open hearts, determined to see things for ourselves. So endearing was the hospitality which greeted us in this ancient but unknown land that our lingering prejudices were dissolved and we caught a glimpse of an ideal even higher than the union of Europe or of East and West—the Federation, not of the World only, but of the Worlds. We must be frank and admit that this goal is still far out on the horizon. But the events of the twentieth century show clearly that it is in sight.

Hell is like nothing on earth. It is no good going there in the hope of finding a replica of English life or even a reflection of Western ideals. Nor must we bias our judgment with thoughts of Heaven, of which also we know very little. We must accept the fact that the universe is large enough to contain at least three worlds, and we must do what lies within our power to foster good relations between them. In this respect Hell has long suffered at the expense of Heaven. Men were always ready in the old days to persecute those who were ahead of their time in seeking to get into touch with their fellow beings across the abyss. But this generation shows signs of a new attitude. It is true that feelers are still put out rather tentatively, and that discussions have not been taken up at the highest level. Nor have diplomatic representatives or official missions been exchanged. But there is a good deal of unofficial communication and several close liaisons have been established.

HELL has responded to this rapprochement with characteristic understanding. While still maintaining an attitude of discreet reserve, she has abandoned the policy of extreme isolationism which she adopted nearly a hundred years ago when doctrinal currents in the West sought to dismiss her as a relevant factor in supernatural relations. I do not mean to say that she lost interest in us. Contrary to what is still widely believed in England, she has always followed our movements with the keenest attention. Even in the days of soul-destroying warfare between the two worlds, she kept friendly contacts wherever she could, while unobtrusively pursuing her patient national policies. Now that we are more ready to recognize her status, she in her turn is coming more into the open, willing to admit with frankness the differences that still separate us and at the same time to concentrate upon and seek to augment all that we have in common. Whether this gesture will be rebuffed remains to be seen. The great thing, to my mind, is to accept her sincerity in a spirit of realism, while not, as I say, demanding the presence of our own idealism. So long as we imagine ourselves under the shadow of the Satanic bogy, no progress can be made. Democracy, as we know to our cost, is a very broad conception, but we must not avenge our disappointment in one direction by condemning unheard the possibilities of another.

Hell is in many respects an ultra-democratic state. Take, for instance, choice of country and choice of government. There is not one single person in Hell who has not freely and personally chosen to settle there and serve under the Devil's Government. It is true that, their democracy being undiluted with constitutional monarchy, there are no elections and so no lawful occasion to throw this Government out. But they have no wish to do so. For the same reason, although there is direction of labour, there are neither strikes nor unemployment. They have no wish to find other work. One thing, they say, is as bad as another. They show an

acceptance of their situation which may strike Western eyes as dull and passive, especially having regard to the terrific heat in which they are compelled to work. It is a notable feature of their judicial system that the accused, after several generations under arrest, always confesses his guilt. Yet this social obedience serves them very well: it ensures the maximum output of their national export, Evil, and at the same time it sublimates every form of personal ambition. There is no capitalist, no bourgeois, no peasant, in Hell: all are workers. Each contributes his all to the Common Bad. Each had liberty to choose, and each chose an equality and a fraternity that the world has yet to see.

IT is true that the Diabolical Authorities enjoy a far higher standard of dying than the vast majority of devils. But this is accepted as the inevitable concomitant of an egalitarian system. There are, if you like, two classes in Hell: the Government and the governed. But the numbers of the Government are so small by comparison with the governed that the country can fairly claim to have attained the maximum of equality. The differences, in any case, are of degree, not of kind. All citizens of Hell subscribe to a unanimity of outlook that might well be the envy of the world. They all serve the same timeless philosophy, and the privileges accorded to Ministers and servants at the Court of the Prince of Lies are conditional upon unquestioning adherence to the teachings of Lucifer, the Master Revolutionary.

To the progressive modern it must seem strange that there is still a people so wholly preoccupied with problems of Evil. For centuries our world placed such an exaggerated taboo upon it that we came in the end to dismiss it from our calculations. But, as is known to-day, to forbid a thing is not to abolish it but only to force it on to the Black Market, transferring the profits to other hands. So with Evil our Governments have deprived the Exchequer of the fruits of a most lucrative trade. At this moment when we are so short of imports from hard currency areas we would do well to take advantage of Satan's long-standing offer to send us an unlimited quantity of Evil in return for a very modest quantity of souls. Surely if an appeal was made in the highest quarters, enough volunteers would be found to emigrate to this unquenchable world?

IT should not be necessary to emphasize the vital importance of this commodity to our economic, political and social system. Evil is a raw material of which our indigenous supplies, though many times multiplied by industrial technique, are nevertheless somewhat limited. As a primary product it is used extensively in the manufacture of all kinds of power other than merely mechanical power, and it is also the chief constituent of hatred and cupidity. This should be sufficient to indicate its incalculable national value. I will not now raise the question whether the industry should in course of time be nationalized, though even in its present disorganized state it is largely under government control.

But let me at once reassure any conservative elements that may still be found at home. I am not suggesting we should import what is evil to-day, but only what was formerly thought to be evil and is now generally recognized as both desirable and good. Evil, after all, is only a word for what we dislike. It is associated with Hell, because for so long we nourished a dislike for both the inhabitants and the work of Hell. But as I have already hinted, many of these things are already in wide circulation, and more than anything else it is a question of giving official recognition on an ever-increasing scale to the new mood of the times.

BY an economic approach of this sort it should be possible to sidestep ideological conflicts to the mutual benefit of both parties. The establishment of friendly trade relations will at the same time do more than anything else to dissolve our waning prejudice against Evil and Hell's everlasting dislike of Good. If he will grant us fair play, let us give the Devil his due.

Finally, it was desired unanimously by the delegation that some sort of cultural liaison be established, and it was felt that this

avenue might best be explored by Unesco with its broad religious impartiality and wide national representation. The only churchman with our delegation made a personal approach to Beelzebub upon this matter and met with an unexpectedly favourable reception. It was admitted that propaganda on both sides continued for the most part to assume an inevitable conflict and that neither side had abandoned its faith in ultimate victory and the utter destruction of its enemies. Hell is, for instance, never tired of denouncing Heaven as a Fascist tyranny. But a basis for discussion was discovered in mutual toleration founded upon mutual interest. Beelzebub appeared to take a particular interest in certain contemporary religious movements and to be remarkably well informed about them. It was agreed, however, that should it be possible to arrange a conference with the Academy of Devilish Sciences, the subject of theology would not be discussed. Our churchman declared after this interview that he had been privileged to meet a very great thinker. We, for our part, rejoiced in this demonstration of modern churchmanship.

THE delegation was given a notable send-off. The ancient ceremonies of initiation with pitchfork and cauldron were performed in the traditional fancy-dress, and on the morning of departure the Devil's Advocate, who is perhaps the ablest exponent of Dialectical Diabolism, made us each a personal present of Sinful Pleasure.

I cannot end this short account without a message of gratitude and encouragement to the many devils who befriended us during our visit to Hell. It is our earnest hope that the present age discover its unique mission, not in useless fighting to overcome Evil with Good, but in turning old enemies into new allies with whom to march peacefully forward into the gathering gloom.

MARK JOLYON.

"PERSONS OF IMPORTANCE— IN THEIR TIME"

By CLIFFORD BAX

HOW exciting it is for a very young man who has a passion for literature to meet with men who have already achieved a measure of reputation as writers. . . . Upon some of them he is likely to look with undue awe. He will not have learned how brief are most literary reputations; and the more definite his own potential direction, the more certain it is that he will miscalculate the importance of the writers whom he meets.

I was sixteen when I first met an author. He was a clever dilettante, who was also a draughtsman of some skill, but he had collaborated with W. B. Yeats in an ambitious interpretation of Blake's Prophetic Books, and his intimacy with the Irish poet excited my imagination. Edwin Ellis, who derived from the period of Oscar Wilde, was then a bald, bearded, middle-sized man who easily talked in epigrams. This facility impressed me, as may be supposed, for most lads of sixteen (at least in England) are hesitant and ineffective conversationalists. It stands to reason that in 1902 I was writing verse. Ellis, having persuaded me to send him a few samples, was kind and encouraging, poor man: and I say "poor man" because thirty years later, according to Yeats, he was speechless for several months before he died. "There are poets," Ellis assured me, "and noets. You will never write noetry." He seems to me now to have been one of those lightly talented men who are content with a moderate achievement and whose affability brings them a reward in social success.

About a year later I met Arthur Ransome who was then trying, like so many of our contemporaries, to emulate Walter Pater and yet to earn a livelihood. Both of us would have been astonished if we could have foreseen that ultimately he would become the most popular children's writer of his period. We cannot say of him that "the love of gain, not glory, wing'd his flight", but we can say that he wrote in order to go sailing and fishing. Before long I was introduced to a venerable Welsh man of letters (he was forty-eight, think of it) who carefully fostered my aspirations. He was a good poet who would have been read with more enthusiasm if he had not acquired so much self-control that his depersonalized poems became too literary. It was Ernest Rhys who once declared "I thank God, I can tell the lineage of any poem", a statement which suggests that he soon became too bookish. As a young man he had worked, I believe, as an inspector of mines, and the underground damp had caused his hands to shake so sadly that to watch him manipulate a cup of tea was painful. He was a plain man with a shapeless beard, a Socrates nose and a fine cranium. If he was disappointed as a poet, and this seems morally certain, he knew that as editor of *Everyman's Library* he had been a world-wide sower of literature. His personality was affectionate, sturdy and modest. When I first visited Yeats in 1904, Rhys was present at the back of the occult candle-lit room; and it was he alone who ventured to dissent from the dictum that "the opening stanzas of 'Adonais' are cold, over-classical, not yet inspired": a characteristic example of his sturdiness. The rest of us listened to Yeats with silent reverence.

Posterity would say, I think, that Yeats was the most notable author whom I have known. When "Letters to Florence Farr from G. Bernard Shaw and W. B. Yeats" was published, reviewers gave most of their attention to the contributions of Bernard Shaw; not without justice, for his are by far the more attractive letters; but in years to come it may well be that students of the past will scrutinize with greater eagerness the letters from the poet. He was certainly "of

imagination all compact", as when he said to me "I always remember how you were brought to my rooms, rolled up in a rug like Shaw's Cleopatra". This entrance would have required a carpet rather than a mere rug. L. A. G. Strong, who knew him much better than I did, says that he has met no man whose conversation naturally remained on so high a level; and this continual preoccupation with ideas had given his face a distinction and nobility which proclaimed the existence of the soul in Man. His Vedantism and even his astrology were congenial and familiar ground to me, and if we never became more than acquaintances the reason may be that, as his biographer shows, he built up an effective, artificial *persona* for use in society. Like A.E. (of whom I have written elsewhere), he was a solo-talker. I had no chance even of observing that I had never been wrapped in a rug; and that remark is an example of his imagination not only because the incident never occurred but also because when I first met him my hands were bandaged and I was wearing mittens to keep the bandages clean. His imagination may have enlarged the mittens into the rug. Alternatively, he may have confused me with some genuine Cleopatra, for there was an afternoon in Hampstead when, having talked to a lady for more than an hour, he said courteously: "Excuse me—am I speaking to Mrs. Podmore or Mrs. Dryhurst?"

Yeats looked like a poet or a prince. Havelock Ellis, with his wavy silver mane, his god-like silver beard, his height and his aquamarine eyes, looked like a sage, an Arctic explorer, or one of Blake's portraits of the Deity. Here was a great man, but he was so little of a soloist that a friend might have some difficulty in keeping the conversation afloat. He preferred to answer questions, and this he did with much caution. "Do you think," someone asked him, "that Freud's extreme emphasis on sex indicates that he himself must be obsessed by it?" "It is possible," replied Ellis, "possible—but so are various explanations." There can seldom have been so near a blend of scientist and artist since Leonardo was alive. The artist in him was an aspect so genuine that beauty yielded him a hundred times as much happiness and consolation as most men derive from it; and as a scientist he differed from most of his contemporaries by keeping a really "open mind", even so far as admitting that survival of death had not been disproven and ought still to be pondered.

Cunninghame Graham is probably not now remembered. He was another handsome author and versatile man. Rumour reiterated that he was an exceptional public speaker, and when I met him we were placed chair by chair as speakers at a Literary Dinner. To follow him was like going in to bat when Dennis Compton has just returned to the pavilion. After my ordeal I said to Graham, "I seem to have forgotten most of what I intended to say." Much to my surprise, he answered: "Don't worry about that. Everybody does just the same." Pinero and Barrie were successively Presidents of the Dramatists' Club. It was nostalgic to sit next to the former at those delightful luncheons, and amusing to sit next to the latter. Pinero had become deaf, but with an effort we could arouse a conversation. At this time—about 1932—he had realized (as he said to Somerset Maugham) that "they don't want me any more." I had missed his true overlordship of the British theatre, and yet was old enough to remember some of his late-autumn triumphs—"Letty" in particular. When I asked him, eager for an answer to a question which I knew might be stale: "Which of your plays do you like best?" it must have been the bitterness of a fallen giant that made him answer: "The one which made most money." On another occasion at the same delightful Club (for dramatists really hope that their colleagues will succeed), I spoke with the arch-artificer when one of my plays had just been revived. Considering how most famous authors are oblivious of work later than their own, I was amazed to hear the old man say, piercing me from under his thatched eyebrows: "I think they've given your play a stronger cast this time." Barrie, on his first appearance as President, illustrated the witty observation of an American writer who observed that "he has always backed shyly

into the limelight". At the end of our eating we expected a speech, but time passed and the wee President continued to chat about cricket to left and right. When we had resigned ourselves to his self-effacement he did rise up. "I first joined this Club," he said, "a long, long time ago. Some of you were bairns in your cradle or were not yet born. In those days the Club included many memorable playwrights who are now, let us trust, writing dialogue in the cerulean ink of heaven. . . . But best of all I remember one man: a very talkative man: Irish: with a red beard and red opinions. . . . I often wonder what has become of him." As a rule, Barrie talked about cricket, and especially about the Australian teams whom he had entertained, but he once told me of a silent film which he had caused to be made. Bernard Shaw and William Archer certainly took part in it, and so did other celebrities whose names are now lost to me. "I wonder what has become of it?"

Colossal reputations have usually proved to be colossal bubbles that burst into nothing when the bubble-blower died; and it is obvious that a writer who deals energetically with Burning Questions will reap an instant harvest. Consider, for instance, the popularity in their own day of Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells of the one part, and of Joseph Conrad and George Moore of the other part. Many thousands of people, especially young people, looked upon Shaw and Wells as guides to contemporary thought. The fact that neither paid any heed to religion or psychical research left no sense of hollowness in the minds of their admirers, for these admirers had already jettisoned religion. For this reason we found that dithyrambic applause was given to a play by a rationalist about a visionary. Everyone would have agreed that Mary Baker Eddy had missed the main point if she had written a play about Herbert Spencer in terms of Christian Science, but a generation which assumed that all visions must be symptoms of hysteria found nothing ludicrous in Shaw's *Saint Joan*. Moreover, Shaw was, I believe, the first writer to make conscious use of publicity, for in earlier days all writers, like doctors, regarded deliberate

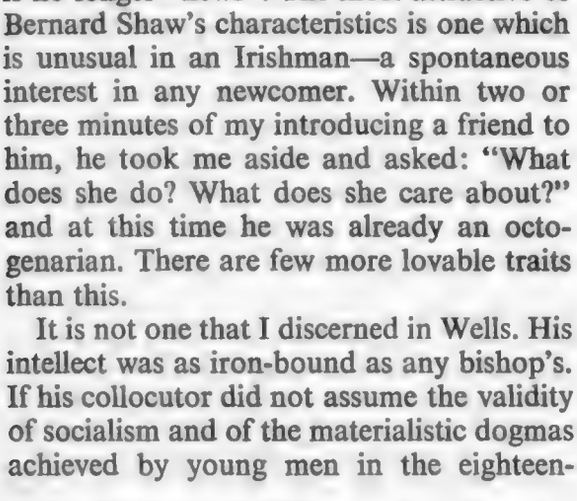
HAVELOCK ELLIS

E. V. LUCAS

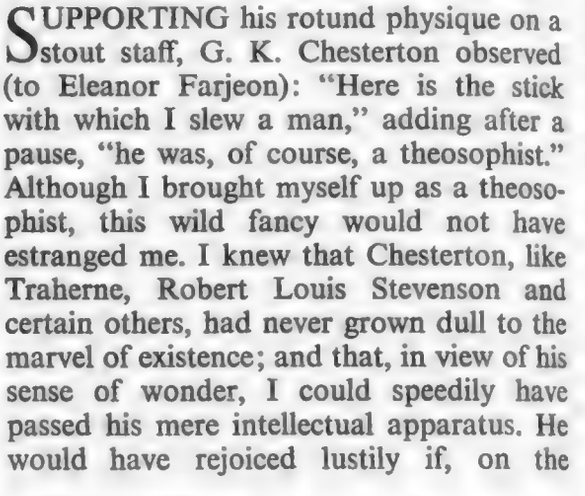
publicity as not compatible with the dignity of their profession. The doctors left such devices to the drum-beating mountebank. Bernard Shaw is no mountebank; he is, indeed, an earnest reformer; but those who keep their eyes on the present are thrown aside by the future. A re-awakening of spiritual awareness would leave his works languishing in the sixpenny tray. As it is unlikely to occur, the collapse will not come until so genial and entertaining a personality is no longer "news". The most attractive of Bernard Shaw's characteristics is one which is unusual in an Irishman—a spontaneous interest in any newcomer. Within two or three minutes of my introducing a friend to him, he took me aside and asked: "What does she do? What does she care about?" and at this time he was already an octogenarian. There are few more lovable traits than this.

It is not one that I discerned in Wells. His intellect was as iron-bound as any bishop's. If his collocutor did not assume the validity of socialism and of the materialistic dogmas achieved by young men in the eighteen-eighties, Wells was left floundering. He felt the futility of trying to converse with a troglodyte. In appearance he was insignificant, the sort of man whom you might not recognize. In manner he was cocky. In small behaviour he showed that he expected any acquaintance to share his prejudices. At an hotel in Wales, for instance, I donned a dinner-jacket on the first evening of my visit. Wells, as I passed his table, pointed at my attire with mute reproach.

SUPPORTING his rotund physique on a stout staff, G. K. Chesterton observed (to Eleanor Farjeon): "Here is the stick with which I slew a man," adding after a pause, "he was, of course, a theosophist." Although I brought myself up as a theosophist, this wild fancy would not have estranged me. I knew that Chesterton, like Traherne, Robert Louis Stevenson and certain others, had never grown dull to the marvel of existence; and that, in view of his sense of wonder, I could speedily have passed his mere intellectual apparatus. He would have rejoiced lustily if, on the



W. B. YEATS



G. K. CHESTERTON

ocassion of his boast, I had responded: "And here is the theosophist whom you bludgeoned, so why hold out any longer against the notion of reincarnation?"

Not many writers are pompous or "paralysed by self-esteem", and Chesterton was as friendly as any man could be.

There was an evening when, as a guest, he joined the cricket-dinner which the Mayor of Bath was giving to my team. We asked the dear rotund man to "speak". "Gentlemen," he rumbled, "I have various points of sympathy with your game. That cricket ball—so round—well, need I labour the comparison since I am standing before you? And your bats, how they belabour the poor ball, always reminding me of the jokes in the press about my—circular—appearance. And then, the wicket! A trinity united by the bails, a religious edifice: the Three in One. Gentlemen, I hope that when I am dead you will bury me between your wickets."

Many writers and musicians have an inexplicable liking for cricket. C. B. Fry has observed that he could easily fill a box at Lord's with editors and poets, and it is true. My own touring team included, at one time or another, Arnold Bax, Julius Harrison, Armstrong Gibbs and B. W. O'Donnell, the military bandmaster; J. C. Snaith, Herbert Farjeon, Stacy Aumonier, Harold Monro, Alec Waugh, Sir John Squire and Edward Thomas. Snaith was tall, lanky, bespectacled and gloomy, but at heart he believed in his erratic talent. He was older than the rest of us; and as he had scored a hit when he was twenty-one with his Meredithian novel "Broke of Covenden", those of us who were unfledged regarded him with much respect. I enthusiastically collected all obtainable novels by my new author-friend. In these days he is probably unread, and certainly he inclined to create fantastic characters in a realistic setting—with an unconvincing effect. He was also unwise in finding a phrase that amused him ("I in whom runs the blood of the Plantagenets") and riding it until it was lame and panting. His career was diminuendo, but he seemed not to recognize that he had served his best wine first. As a batsman he was the best who ever played for my team, but I was sometimes embarrassed by his belief in himself as a bowler.

Once I invited Snaith and E. V. Lucas to dinner. Snaith believed that Lucas (on the board of Methuen's) had rejected one of his books, but Lucas denied knowledge of the rejection, saying "In my House are many readers". He is one of the few among my dead friends whom I still miss. "When we first met," I said to him, "at that Cricket Dinner given by the Worshipful Company of Carpenters, you did your utmost to alienate me." "Yes," he growled, "I always do that to men whom I fear I am going to like." He was the "clubable" man of Dr. Johnson's dream, belonging to at least a dozen clubs, and this part of his life caused me to wonder whether he was so unhappy as not to dare to be much alone. I knew that he had been involved, as not many persons are, in a genuine "grand passion", and that after the death of his lady he was essentially unconsolable. That is why he gadded about. He had hooded, baleful eyes, and you could see that it lay within his power to scald a man with a phrase. Indeed, his dictatorial treatment of restaurant waiters was inexcusable until we heard that he had once said: "You should always leave a restaurant better than you found it." In tune with his era he was a sceptic. I was the more surprised, therefore, when he sent me one of his books with the inscription "To one who believes, from another". He spread his butter too thinly and his literary sandwiches are not sustaining. Still, Lucas was a natural essayist—when you have read two or three of his books you know him, a genial man interested in small matters, unwilling to grapple with humanity's deepest considerations. A writer who is convinced that death is the end of all consciousness, can produce great work, as Hardy did, but every writer should give a definite card-vote on this fundamental issue.

Nobody now or in the future will realize that Arnold Bennett could make a writer's fortune. He was the average man—with an uncommon industry. There is no breath of poetry in any of his books. Other writers seem now to agree with me that he was "an

expert reporter". When he could win fifty guineas for a short article in *The Evening Standard*, he was helpful to young literary aspirants. Many authors who are "established" do their best for up-comers. The ability to help young writers is one of the perquisites of growing old. To me, as to many others, Bennett was encouraging: but he must have known that he, with his tacit Materialism, and I with my avowed Buddhism, were almost literally "poles apart". "The Old Wives' Tale" is a noble chronicle of humdrum lives. Bennett somehow caught the taste of his time, but he had shot his arrow at worldly success. If he had met William Blake he would have given the poor madman a few guineas, and if he had met William Shakespeare he would have told him how to market his plays.

THE story of Edward Thomas's life is now well known: how, for instance, he married while he was still an undergraduate at Oxford, how pertinaciously he struggled to earn a livelihood by reviewing books, how he once drove himself so hard that he produced five books of his own in a year, how his spirit lightened when he became a soldier with no gnawing responsibilities, how he suddenly began to write poetry of great distinction, and how at the end of a battle he was filling his clay pipe when a Parthian bullet killed him. His career, with its immortal blossoming at the end, is perhaps unique. He would probably have regarded himself as a sorry failure but he never became sour. On the contrary, despite his desperate hunt for work, he was always a careful and conscientious reviewer and one who was so quick to detect genuine poetry that he did much to herald the lyrics of W. H. Davies and Walter de la Mare.

. He wrote a kind of stupified prose, prose without energy, without any variations of tempo, a colour-blind prose; but how exquisitely his nervous verse-rhythms match the sensitive movements of his mind. . . . To have him as a guest in your house for a month or two was to receive an education in literary sensibility. He told me that in early days he had over-valued the verse of William Watson, nor would he co-operate with me in my lone championship of Stephen Phillips. Thomas was too shy to encourage the love that he so much valued; a friend had to work hard at the friendship; but it was easy to see when he was relaxed and happy, and that in itself was enough reward. Physically he was tall, slender and beautiful—a word not often used to describe a man, and yet, having seen him strip for a bathe in a Wiltshire river, I know that it is the right word. There is some danger that people will not realize how much humour he had in him, as when, speaking at breakfast about a fine poet who was one of his best friends, he slyly asked: "Don't you think there's a big advance in this new book by Gordon Bolmondeley?"

W. H. Davies—the typical small dark Welshman—lustily revelled in his unexpected fame. Another poet, Richard Church, introduced me to "the Super-tramp". His mind was so quaint that, like any cheeseparing landlady, he had been counting up the number of lines which a literary paper had accorded to his latest book of verse and to a new volume by De la Mare. "How expensive it is," he said, "to despatch a letter. Apart from the three-ha'penny stamp, you must consider the cost of the paper, the envelope, the ink and the nib."

EVERYONE would be comfortable if I were now to say that, after all, writers are much like other men. They are not. They are more highly strung, they are spurred onward by a mysterious desire to be remembered when, as we say, they are dead: an instinct which Sir John Squire, in an essay of sound sense and uncommon beauty, suggests may be an "intimation of immortality". It is of no pertinence that most writers are soon forgotten after they leave this world, for what really matters is that every writer while he is at work should hope that his pages may delight unborn generations. Whenever a man begins a poem, a novel or a play, he should feel that he is an immortal, he should aim at making that piece of work the best of its kind that has ever been inscribed.

Theatre

GREAT COMEDY ACTING

BY HUBERT GRIFFITH

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL. By Sheridan. *New.*

CAGE ME A PEACOCK. By Noel Langley. *Cambridge Theatre* (*transferred*).

HARVEY. By Mary Chase. *Prince of Wales.*

"THE whole aim of the theatre is to make a set of real things seem to be happening to a set of real people."

This seems a sweeping enough statement, even although uttered by a great master of the theatre, by G.B.S. How far does its applicability go? How far does it cover anything outside the strictly "straight" theatre —i.e., strictly naturalistic comedy and strictly naturalistic drama? How far does it fit in with 'heroic' drama, and with so-called stylized comedy, the comedy of manners?—or with farce? Or with the essentially stylized conventions of opera (after all part of the theatre), and the still more stylized conventions of the ballet? Was it merely one of those paradoxes thrown off by the Old Man in the heat of the moment? Or, as he would prefer to call them, "truths violently overstated" for the express purpose of getting people to think about them, and therefore possibly to realize their grain of basic veracity?

I for one, having had intimate traffic with the theatre over many years, have had time to think about the proposition very often; and have for long come to the conclusion that the remark is neither incidental paradox, (nor "truth overstated", for any purpose whatever), but a simple statement of fact, put simply, and capable of the widest and most general application to everything implied by the word drama.

To the most stylized and conventionalized form of heroic drama, say Racine's "*Phèdre*"? It is written in a form of verse of inconceivable complexity, and in a tradition where even certain normally current and polite words had to be rejected as "*mots bas*"; it had to copy supposedly rigidly, certain classic formulæ, that Racine and his contemporaries never even fully understood. It is in a word, the high point of stylization. And yet . . . if at the great moments of the great play we do not feel—are not *made* to feel—that a certain woman, the heroine, is at least as passionately and tragically and hopelessly in love with a younger man as any modern woman who commits suicide after a divorce-case—then the drama has failed, and the Queen of Athens has only been an actress spouting speeches. In other words, we have, or have not (even if for the great moments only) been made to feel that a set of real things is happening to a set of real people. A Phèdre who lets us *perceive* the beauty of her diction, rather than compels us to *feel* the passion of the woman, is an elocution-mistress rather than an actress. (And in France, as in lands nearer home, there are more elocution-mistresses than actresses. Hence the high salaries paid to the real actresses when they arise once, or less than once, in a generation.)

The limits of the space in the current number of the *New English* would not allow me to expand this argument fully into all adjacent fields. I will merely remark in passing that a new Isolda who comes to us to Covent Garden—turns out to be either an Isolda, or a dramatic soprano who can sing the top notes. (I.e. She does, or does not, convince us, at the great moments, of the reality of Isolda's passion. Fewer than do not, do. Those that do, we remember.)

. And even in the still more conventionalized world of ballet—wherever any dramatic or lyric theme whatever is attempted, the same rule applies. If in "*Swan Lake*", in the encounters between the Swan Queen and the hunter Prince, there is not forced on us some genuine sense of lyric attraction, compassion, and pleading—some intense (if etheralized) form of believable human

emotion passing between them—then the scenes merely exhibit a ballerina dancing "on points", not necessarily different in kind, if in degree, from a performing poodle. The "reality", even if momentary, of the emotion must have been there.

TO come back home, to the theatre proper. Two of the finest pieces of serious, and even moving acting that I have seen for many years have occurred in the last few weeks—one in a so called stylized high comedy; the other in quite the craziest farce that has ever come to our shores—from Sir Laurence Olivier in "*The School for Scandal*", and from Mr. Sid Field in "*Harvey*", respectively.

I was not in the least surprised by this, but merely rejoiced in it.

Laurence Olivier, as producer as well as chief actor, has chosen the artifice of being simple—he has chosen to take Sheridan's classic comedy at its face value, forgetting all "period" artificiality, playing it simply as if it were a new play by a modern author—"real things happening to real people."

The effect is electrifying, if simply because no one in our own generation has chosen to do so before!

There is a "tradition" that Sir Peter Teazle must be played as an octogenarian buffoon in order to get cheap laughs by clowning. There is no particular or even general warrant in the text for this. The cattiest thing that either Lady Teazle or general gossip can say against her husband is that "he is old enough to be her father"—the age-long reproach against husbands of young wives who are of more than undergraduate status. But girls married young in the eighteenth-century, at seventeen and eighteen—and Lady Teazle is drawn as being a particularly juvenile specimen. Sir Peter may easily have been no more than in the late thirties or early forties. The scene where, after hearing from her own light-hearted lips that she wishes him dead that she may inherit his money he promptly goes off to his lawyer and makes her financially free whatever she may do—establishes him as a man of the most sensitive devotion.

Sir Laurence, in short, sticks to the text. He plays Sir Peter as a man who loves his wife, and has every claim to have this love respected. He leads Miss Vivien Leigh (as producer he had an obvious say in Miss Leigh's attack on her part) to play it as an extravagant young provincial, whose head has been turned by her success with the Town—but who can be believed to have a genuine attachment to him.

And every scene, both its comedy and its drama, is "made" by the fact that both Sir Laurence and Miss Leigh have the simplicity to be sincere—the tortured ecstasy of the love — culminating in quarrel duologues; the show-down of the Screen scene itself. When the screen is finally down, and, instead of the customary tumult of mirth, there is the long moment of dead silence while Sir Peter slowly bends forward in agony, and Lady Teazle from the opposite side of the stage covers her face with her hands in shame—then is there a moment of real emotion—a "real set of things happening to an overwhelmingly real set of people"; and once again one realizes the supreme characteristic of English drama, the mingling of the tragic with the comic, inherited from the Medieval Moralities through Shakespeare, down to Shaw and O'Casey. No living people can be all-tragic. No living people can be all-comic. Laurence Olivier's production makes the dead bones of a classic leap alive to our eyes. If it happens to be "untraditional", according to some critics, I care not a fig for that.

Miss Vivien Leigh always had extraordinary graciousness of movement. It was apparent a dozen years ago when she was playing *Titania* with the Old Vic., long before she had any claims to be an important actress—or indeed anything but a miracle of Watteauesque beauty. Now she has immeasurably increased her beauty (this is not the paradox it sounds) by the sensitiveness of her acting. She gives the part the ever-lovely word radiance.

I can believe that the Sir Peter—Lady Teazle parts have never been better played in the hundred-and-eighty years of the play's existence than now by Olivier and Miss Leigh at the New.

(What Sir Laurence meant by introducing the farcical harliquinade-cum-ballet scenes,

with false noses and jerky gestures, between Tattle, Sir Benjamin Backbite and the others, must be left to Sir Laurence's own conscience. He, as producer, must take sole responsibility, and I will neither blame nor mention the actors. But if by some Quilpian malevolence—unthinkable to a man of his nature—he had decided to show how comedy should NOT be acted, and to set off, by contrast, his own memorable and dignified performance, he could not have made a better foil.)

MR. SID FIELD, a music-hall comedian of genius, brings to us a farce with the only entirely original plot that I can remember in my lifetime.

The "*Harvey*" of the title, as many readers will probably remember by now, is a non-existent white rabbit, possibly more than six feet tall but certainly no less. He is first seen in an alcoholic vision by the hero of the story (that is to say, by Mr. Sid Field), then becomes Mr. Field's permanent (but still unseen) companion, backchat-associate, and general solace from the multiple evils of life. Then, when Mr. Field is unfortunately put into an asylum, Harvey follows him there, Mr. Field's family gradually accepting Harvey as a possibility, and the asylum staff finally taking him as a positive actuality. They jump out of the way when Mr. Field announces that Harvey is likely to arrive . . .

Now in telling you this story very simply I am asking you to believe that lunacy—or near-lunacy—can be put on to the stage without the smallest offence to our sensibilities, which I would never have believed until the present play.

It is only done—can only have been achieved—by Mr. Field taking the part with dead seriousness and earnestness. If he had winked and leered at the gallery, implying "How funny I am!"—it would have shot the reality of the play to pieces. Watch for the exits when he beckons Harvey, either to follow or to precede him. Watch for one other exit when he actually stumbles, believing that Harvey has stuck out his feet to trip him up . . . I am beginning, forgive me to talk about Harvey as though he actually existed. Believe me, he does not.

Mr. Sid Field plays the chief part (apart from that of Harvey) with much distinction and with great charm. He never goes out of his part, nor betrays his part for an instant. Miss Athene Seyler, our greatest living exponent of high-comedy acting, manages to give one of the best performances of her career in this all but lunatic menagerie.

But, for better, for worse, go and see "*Harvey*".

TWO good pieces of news. A light musical comedy called "*Cage Me a Peacock*", is still running, now transferred after many months to the Cambridge Theatre. There is no particular reason why it shouldn't be, except this one reason—that it has distinction.

In its earliest days, at the Strand Theatre, I believe that it very nearly failed through lack of support. After all, what is one to expect. The theme was unusual, a classical theme, the "Lucretia-Tarquin" theme, treated light-heartedly. The music was written by people who enjoyed writing music for its own sake, and were not concerned with beating out a "theme-song" that could be "plugged". The Chorus, as is unusual with musical-comedy choruses, had things to say that had a definite bearing on the action. Why should the great British public tolerate these excursions of art and intellect into its own chosen domain of mediocrity—of musical-comedy?

It is enough to say that they have; though I suspect that the enchantingly gay and accomplished personality of little Miss Yeolande Donlan has something to do with it.

The other piece of good news is the Knighting of Sir Bronson Albery. He has been in turn, and usually concurrently, owner and manager and director of the Criterion, Wyndham's, and the New Theatres.

He is the leading "commercial" manager in London. He has never pretended that his highly and efficiently organized group has been out to make a loss for the sake of "art". Nevertheless, he has taken risks, and has encouraged undiscovered talent. He has dealt fairly, and has had imagination. There are very few, from authors and actors and stage-staffs—and even critics—who will not be glad to congratulate Sir Bronny.

LOVE OF THE PAST

THE time is alive, we know, and that one is dead;
But I visited along the journeys of a bed
The abandoned country, I went down the tombs
With a miner's lamp into the sheeted rooms.

And, none of my doing, the fallen petal like a bird
Flew up to its place, the brown photograph stirred,
The old lace of a look fluttered, the pressed flower
Answered the first word
To the affirmations of the love-making hour.

O there was such a burning of glances,
Bubbling of laughter, all the tasteless tenses
I saltly savoured, saw the classic seas
Of childhood sailed by the legendary breeze
And the white clouds forming into divine shapes.
By a door of cockcrow I made my cunning escapes.

O with looking to be blind, to be famished with tasting,
To be lost with finding, to be faint with resting,
To be harmed with having, to be lame with flying,
To have found the dead living and the living dying !

And what is all this but to lose your way?
So you enter, about the middle of the day,
The old forest, which is so easy to enter,
And the daylight grows immediately a little fainter:

An area of unknowing where the dial hand
At the limits of measurement falters and comes to a stand
And the map is unreliable and must be discarded,
And all the sparrows of a town fall unrecorded.

HAL SUMMERS.

LOVE OF THE FUTURE

O YOU who love the future,
You have your youth for ever.
Who is free like you,
Who is so true,
Changes and does not waver ?

Nearer they come and nearer,
The hills of the horizon,
But when they are gone
The road runs on
Into another season.

Your hope rides in no harbour,
In restlessness is your rest,
To seek is the sum
Of your wisdom,
And all your quiet is in a quest.

To the lovers of the past time
You seem one of the madmen ;
You seem to them
Like those who dream ;
They seem to you like dead men.

The lovers of the present,
You cannot understand them ;
You cannot look
At their picture-book,
Your focus flies beyond them.

But come to the hill at evening
Or to the moor at morning,
Beggared, outcast,
When east or west
Braziers of light are burning

And there, look, a new country
Mile upon mile reclining
With distance beckons,
Clothing in a second's
Vision a lifetime's meaning,

Then like a bird set free
Out of a little grating
Into the race
And round of space—
O what a world lies waiting !

HAL SUMMERS.

NOVELISTS AND THE LAW

By LORD GODDARD

I HAVE chosen this as the subject of my address* to-night for two reasons: firstly because having no claim to be an author or a literary critic I must take a subject about which I know something, and secondly because it gives me an opportunity to appeal to those who introduce law into novels to remember that they are dealing with a technical subject on which some professional assistance is highly desirable unless the author has had at least some degree of legal instruction.

Let us consider what is the business or concern of a novelist who introduces law into a novel. He may, of course, burlesque or caricature, as may a playwright, if it is clear that he is doing so. No one could suppose that Gilbert's *Trial by Jury* was anything but a burlesque and a very good one, too. But if he is making a legal problem or a trial, whether civil or criminal, a principle theme he ought to take the trouble to see that he avoids elementary blunders. He may make a lawyer a villain, he may paint lawyers in exaggerated colours, but when he intends to delineate a reputable solicitor or barrister he should take care that he does not make him behave in a way that no decent member of the profession would dream of acting; still less give him credit for so doing. It is not to be expected that his novel will be a treatise on some branch of the law, nor is pedantic accuracy in matters of procedure to be looked for, but if law is to be brought seriously into a work of fiction it should be done so that his professional readers will neither shudder nor laugh derisively, nor should it destroy his non-professional readers' belief in elementary principles or lead them to believe that lawyers are necessarily scoundrels or fools, or both.

MANY years ago I came across a most amusing and ironical essay by Jerome K. Jerome entitled "The Novelists' Guide to the Law". Two passages remain in my memory. The first—"if a man dies and his will can't be found all his property immediately passes to the nearest villain". If care be taken to see that the villain is a person who is capable of taking on an intestacy, for which purpose a reference to the Trustee Act, 1925, is desirable, all well and good; there is nothing wrong in that. But the second passage contains something which is only too commonly found in novels—"anything can be proved by affidavit". This is simply untrue, and, of course, Jerome meant it ironically, but it occurs in novels so often as to appear axiomatic. I remember reading a book by no less an artist than Archibald Marshall. Towards the end the unfortunate but innocent hero was standing his trial for some serious crime and things looked pretty black. But staunch friends had been at work ferreting out the truth in the eastern Mediterranean or some such place. At a critical juncture of the trial someone rushes into Court, hands counsel a lot of documents and he exclaims: "all has come to light, My Lord—so and so has been discovered, so and so has confessed—here it all is—all on affidavit"! which would have been just as much use as a theatre programme for all the good it would have done. However, it did the trick all right in the book and the prisoner was at once acquitted amid loud cheers. What the deponents might have said if cross-examined does not seem to have occurred to anyone and the judge must have been suffering from senile decay if he allowed affidavits to be read.

Even this grotesque happening was outdone by a certain lady novelist who in the late nineteen 'twenties wrote a book founded obviously on the trial of Harold Greenwood, the Kidwelly solicitor who was tried and acquitted for poisoning his wife; one of Marshall Hall's most famous defences. The husband in the book was a most unfortunate man, completely innocent but there was a lot of uncommonly awkward evidence to be got over. At one stage of the trial when

* Text of an address given to the Authors' Club in the Autumn of 1948.

the doctor was giving evidence as to the wife's last and fatal illness the kindly judge leant over the bench and said to the prisoner: "This must be very painful for you to hear; would you like to go below while this evidence is given"? That his counsel did not at once turn to his client and say: "Get down quick" showed gross negligence on his part. If the judge's kind offer had been accepted an acquittal was inevitable as no conviction could possibly have stood with evidence given in the absence of the prisoner. Had the authoress asked a young barrister of one year's standing to read the proofs she would have been saved from a blunder which makes the whole trial read like a farce. While on women novelists, let me mention George Eliot. Not many women, nor many men for that matter, would have the courage to found a plot on that conveyancing mystery, a base fee. But this is what she did in *Felix Holt*, and though the ramifications of the Transome property are rather tiresome and spoil the book for many readers, she got her law right. This she could only have done by getting expert professional assistance which was the sensible course to take.

PRACTISING lawyers have seldom been novelists. Stanley Weyman was a member of the Oxford Circuit, and I remember when I was reading for the Bar, spotting a passage in that delightful *Castle Inn*, then just published, which showed that he had not forgotten his law though he had forsaken the profession for authorship. Those who have read the book may remember how the little attorney, Mr. Fishwick, intrudes into Sir George Soane's room at the Mitre at Oxford and asks to be allowed to make his will. Asked how he knew Sir George was going to make a will he said he heard him tell his servant to lay out pen and paper and to bring the landlord and another with him when he called his master in the morning, "and knowing that is only of a will you need three witnesses I put two and two together". This is perfect accuracy; the story takes place in 1767 and in those days three witnesses were requisite for the due execution of a will under the Statute of Frauds; it was not till the Wills Act of 1837 that the number was reduced to two.

Probably the most successful novel by a lawyer was Samuel Warrens *Ten Thousand a Year*, which had an enormous success in its day. The modern reader will have to put up with the mawkish sentiment which surrounds the dispossessed landowner and his family, those martyred aristocrats as Thackeray called them, and the overdone buffoonery of Tittlebat Titmouse who claims and obtains the estate. This was all in the mid-Victorian tradition, but it is for all that a thundering good story, in which the technicalities of the action of ejectment, including the old legal friends, or should I say ghosts, John Doe and Richard Roe, are all explained in a way a layman can understand. It is a book which all law students should read but it is not only lawyers who can enjoy it. You get a picture of unscrupulous lawyers of whom Quirk Gammon and Snap are specimens. There is the high minded, not very bright, family solicitor and a trial at York Assizes, made interesting and as accurate as a law report. Judge and Counsel are drawn from life: Lord Widdrington is Lord Tenterden, Mr. Subtle who leads for Titmouse is the great Scarlet, afterwards Lord Abinger, Quicksilver is Brougham, and the Attorney-General who represents the Defendant, is Follett. In passing, let me say that there is to-day a member of the Bar who under the pseudonym of Cecil Hare writes thrillers, the merit of which for present purposes is that you get a perfect picture of a modern Assize. "Tragedy at Law" is well worth the few shillings it costs.

NOW let us consider Dickens, who can never be ignored in this context. He was not articled either to a solicitor or proctor but he served as an attorney's clerk for about two years. It was this and his employment as a reporter, both at Doctors Commons and in the Courts at Westminster, that gave him his knowledge of the law. He pictures the Commons both in *David Copperfield* and *Sketches by Boz*, and no less an authority than Sir William Holdsworth vouches for his accuracy. He

wrote at a time when the Ecclesiastical Courts were becoming increasingly unpopular owing to their jurisdiction over non-clerical persons; his account of the brawling case, *Bumple v. Sludbury*, is a perfect piece of satire; but while he saw the defects he failed to recognize the merits of the civilians. The members of Doctors Commons were a really learned body of men, responsible for the foundations of our Admiralty jurisprudence and for much of the learning on the law of probate. No doubt reform was needed and was forthcoming but the Commons produced such great men as Sir Leoline Jenkins, Lord Stowell the greatest Prize lawyer of his or any age, Sir Herbert Jenner Fust and in later times, Dr. Phillimore and Dr. Lushington.

Then, of course, there is the immortal trial, Bardell *v.* Pickwick, when we turn to the common law. It is a really accurate account of a trial at *nisi prius*; it is said to have been revised by Sergeant Talfourd, who was afterwards a judge, and the speech of Sergeant Buzfuz was said by no less a critic than Sir Frank Lockwood to be the best opening on record in a breach of promise action. The only real criticism that can be made of the trial is that Mr. Skimpin called Mr. Winkle as a witness for the Plaintiff and then cross-examined him, but that is not a serious blemish. Sam Weller's examination is really a very skilful piece of work; he was obviously hostile, yet Sergeant Buzfuz avoided cross-examination except at one point; his questions as to Sam's eyesight. An admirable examination paper for students could be based on the case; why did the proceedings begin with a *capias* and what was it; what were the sittings after term; why was the trial at Guildhall; what is meant by praying a tales, are all questions that would have presented no difficulty to a lawyer of Dickens' day, but few students and not many practitioners to-day would be able to answer them off hand.

Dickens obviously got the idea for the chops and tomato sauce and warming pan letters from the famous trial which had only recently taken place of Norton *v.* Melbourne in which the Prime Minister of the day was the successful defendant, in an action of *crim. con.* The weakness of the case against him was shown by the fact that the plaintiff had to rely for proof of a guilty intimacy on a few notes written by Lord Melbourne to a lady he had known for years in such terms as "How are you. I shall not be able to call to-day but probably shall to-morrow —Yrs, Melbourne", and "There is no House to-day. I shall call after the levee about four or half past—if you wish it later, let me know. I shall then explain to you about going to Vauxall—Yrs., Melbourne". Sir William Follett's comment on them was: "They seem to import much more than the words convey. They are written cautiously, I admit—there is no profession of love in them but they are not written in the ordinary style of correspondence usually adopted in this country between intimate friends".

Read Sergeant Buzfuz's comment on the letters he produced and there can be no doubt what was in Dickens' mind. Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce in *Bleak House* was a perfectly legitimate piece of satire on the state of the Court of Chancery in 1853, the date of its publication, when that amiable and most learned lawyer Lord Cottenham was Chancellor. He was much greater as a judge than a law reformer, and there is, I think, no doubt that the book did provide a great stimulus to the reforms which began soon after its publication. Another author who gives an accurate description of a trial, this time at a country Assize, is Robert Surtees who had been High Sheriff of his County. No better description of a horse coping case could have been written than the account of Doleful *v.* Jorrocks in *Handley Cross*. It may surprise modern readers to find a case starting at 8 p.m., and the judge being fetched from his lodging at 4 a.m. to take the verdict, but that is just what did happen in the middle of last century. I have seen a letter written to his wife by Sir John Coleridge who became a judge in 1837 describing how he went into Court at Exeter Assizes at 9 a.m. and summed up his last case at 2.50 a.m. the next morning. No wonder that jury service was unpopular. There were giants in those days.

I NOW want to deal with that worst of legal blunderers, Anthony Trollope. Let me here acknowledge my debt to my friend, Lord Schuster, like myself a great admirer of Trollope as a story-teller but a keen critic of his atrocious law. I have not the time to deal with all the novels as he has done in a criticism which I wish could be published, and I have selected two or three from the notes which he kindly allowed me to read. Trollope's attitude to lawyers is quite incomprehensible. Obviously he does not like them, but though he frequently means to present his lawyers as respectable and indeed, distinguished members of the profession, he too often makes them do things that no gentleman would dream of, and would ensure their being disbarred or struck off the rolls. And apparently he sees nothing wrong or incongruous in their conduct, which is all the more odd when it is remembered that Trollope occupied a responsible position in the Civil Service and as a hunting man was accustomed to mix in decent society.

Take the lawyers in *Orley Farm*; the central feature of the story is that in proving her husband's will, Lady Mason committed perjury by swearing that he executed it in her presence when in fact she forged it. Years after this was discovered by the heir at law who hated her. When she found that she ran the risk of prosecution she consulted an old friend of hers, a barrister in good practice, Mr. Furnival. He proceeded to act for her professionally, without any solicitor being instructed, which though highly unprofessional was perhaps just as well when it is seen what he did. He seeks out the solicitor who for years has acted for the heir at law and seems to have been a member of a firm in Lincoln's Inn of the highest standing. He extracts a promise from him that no proceedings should be started without notice to him. This is followed by the solicitor calling on him and disclosing the case they have got against Lady Mason. All this without the knowledge of the client and about as gross a breach of professional confidence as can be imagined.

But Trollope sees nothing wrong in it. Then the respectable and respected Mr. Furnival sends his clerk to try to buy off the principal witness against Lady Mason for £1,000, a proceeding for which he would not only assuredly be disbarred, but which was clearly a criminal offence of a most serious nature. Having thus acted as counsel, solicitor and suborner, Furnival appears for her before the magistrates, sits on a chair close to the chairman and whispers in his ear! This is not a burlesque, it is put forward in all seriousness. Then the author deals in great detail with the case before the magistrates. He tells us of all the witnesses, but they never get anywhere near proving a *prima facie* case: no attesting witness was called, nor was anyone called to prove that Lady Mason ever swore to anything. She was, however, committed for trial, and as those were the days of Grand Juries the only possible result would have been that the judge would have directed them to ignore the bill. However, that did not happen and Lady Mason duly appeared at the Surrey Assizes. When she got there, strangely enough, she did not go into the dock, but was given a prominent seat among the spectators; one wonders who by. She was not called on to plead, which was perhaps just as well as she would undoubtedly have pleaded guilty and that would not have done at all. It would have spoilt the story.

MR. Furnival was now led by Mr. Chaffanbrass, Q.C., and a more incompetent bungler never wore a wig. But as Trollope discloses in his autobiography, he rather likes Chaffanbrass. This preposterous person had made his appearance in an earlier novel, *The Three Clerks*. In that book a man was tried—defended by Chaffanbrass—for that which, at the time when it was supposed to have taken place, was not a criminal offence at all. It was misappropriation by a Trustee of trust funds, but I am not inclined to blame Trollope too much for this as it was made an offence the year following publication of the book. Assuming, however, it was an offence, as it ought to have been, the conduct of the defence was deplorable. The

accused man had been lured into committing the offence by an older man who was an accomplished rogue. Before the trial the accused had made full restitution. Before an Old Bailey jury of those days there would have been a real chance of acquittal on the ground that there was no intent to defraud; at any rate that was the only possible defence.

What Chaffanbrass did was to call the rogue who was by then bitterly hostile to the defendant as his witness, and proceed to cross-examine him, which, of course, he would not have been allowed to do. He extracted such damning evidence against his client by this means as to make conviction inevitable and capped his efforts by saying to the jury: "I have the power of putting my client in the box though he is on trial". In Trollope's lifetime no prisoner could give evidence, except in the case of rape; it was not till 1898 that the Criminal Evidence Act of 1897 allowed prisoners to go into the box and be sworn. This was the leading counsel selected apparently with Mr. Furnival's approval to represent Lady Mason on her trial. Guilty as she undoubtedly was the prosecution was so abominably mismanaged that one might wonder whether Furnival had not bribed the solicitor for the prosecution to make no case. This time they did call an attesting witness to the will who utterly broke down, but that did not prevent Chaffanbrass from savagely attacking him and every witness who was favourable to his client. Still as no one proved the vital and necessary facts, which could quite easily have been proved had the slightest trouble been taken, even Chaffanbrass could not prevent his client from being acquitted, though it must be admitted he did his best to get her convicted.

AND finally a word about the *Last Chronicle of Barset* in my humble opinion one of the best stories ever written, but marred by the grotesque and, indeed, shocking account of the Reverend Josiah Crawley's appearance before the Silverbridge magistrates. What led to it was that Lord Lufton drew a cheque for £20 in favour of his steward, Mr. Soames. The latter had to visit Mr. Crawley and was driven to the parsonage by an ostler at the Dragon of Wantley who picked his pocket and stole the cheque. The ostler passed the cheque to Dan Stringer the clerk to the landlord of the inn, and it was used to make up the rent due to Mrs. Arabin the wife of the Dean of Barchester. The Dean was a friend of Mr. Crawley and sent him £50 in notes to help him in his distress. Mrs. Arabin, unknown to her husband, slipped the cheque into the envelope wishing to make an additional present to Mr. Crawley. This was a somewhat unlikely proceeding, especially as the cheque was not drawn either by or to her tenant, and we are not told if it had ever been endorsed by any of those through whose hands the cheque had gone. Mr. Soames stopped the cheque and when Crawley sent it to the bank to be cashed (it was apparently uncrossed) payment was refused. When questioned about it he was in a broken nervous state and got confused. He first said he got it from Soames, a perfectly natural mistake as the latter had on his visit paid him some money by cheque. His wife, however, maintained that it had come from the Dean who by this time had gone abroad. Mr. Walker, Soames' solicitor, then wrote to the Dean who replied that he had sent Crawley £50 and no more.

This is the weakest part of the story, for it is inconceivable that the Dean would not have spoken to his wife on the subject as she was abroad with him. However, the Dean's letter was enough to lead to a charge of stealing the cheque being preferred against Mr. Crawley who by this time was in such a state of nervous confusion that he would say nothing. The account of the proceedings before the justices is placed before the reader not as a joke or a caricature of magistrates' courts but as a serious account of what is supposed to happen before a bench of county magistrates, advised by a responsible clerk with the prosecution in the hands of the leading solicitor in the neighbourhood. See what happens. The chairman is Lord Lufton, the drawer of the cheque the subject of the

charge. His Lordship evidently had some qualms about sitting, so perhaps had Trollope as he says: "Many people in Silverbridge thought that all wrong". No wonder, but when Lord Lufton expressed his doubts "Mr. Walker overruled him"! He, it will be recalled, was the prosecuting solicitor; more than that, his junior partner was the clerk to the magistrates, a pretty state of things perhaps explaining how the advocate was able to overrule the Bench. There not being a *tittle* of evidence against the wretched defendant, he nevertheless insisted on informing the Bench that he got the cheque from the Dean. Then Walker played his ace of trumps; he produced and read the Dean's letter!

It is impossible to believe that even the most wooden-headed magistrates could have allowed such a thing to be done. So then the Chairman, doubtless with the best intentions, and Mr. Walker proceeded to cross-examine the defendant, a hopelessly irregular and illegal proceeding, as he was not, and at the time of the story could not, have been a witness. Mr. Walker then has a conference with the magistrates; by this time one has ceased to be surprised at anything, but it transpired that Lord Lufton thought there was no evidence of a guilty mind, but another more robust justice, one Fothergill, thought possession of someone else's cheque was conclusive evidence of theft! I suppose neither he, nor Trollope had ever heard of a negotiable instrument.

THE plain fact was that there was no evidence against Crawley at all and he ought to have been discharged; this is what Lord Lufton wanted to do, but, we are told "he submitted to Mr. Walker's instructions" and sent him for trial. However, all's well that ends well; the day before the Assizes the Arabins returned home, all was explained to everyone's satisfaction and then the wonderful Mr. Walker "got the indictment quashed in a jiffy". How he performed this remarkable feat we are not told, probably what happened was that the witnesses went before the Grand Jury, told them of the mistake and thereupon the bill was ignored, so there never was an indictment. It is lamentable that a popular and able novelist could put such a preposterous story before the reading public, asking them to believe that such things could happen even in a magistrates Court in the 'fifties or 'sixties of last century. Whether any competent critic fell upon this chapter and castigated the author I do not know, but he assuredly deserved anything that could be written about him.

There is a great deal of law, or what passes for law, for it is mostly bad, in the other novels, with which space will not permit me to deal. Enough, I hope, has been said to show how perilous it is for laymen to embark on legal topics without enlisting the help of someone qualified to point out the more glaring errors, which was the service that Sergeant Talfourd rendered to Dickens.

STORM OVER SKYE

THE ISLE OF SKYE:
ITS ASSOCIATIONS WITH PRINCE CHARLIE

By SETON GORDON

Jerusalem, Athens and Rome,
I would see them before I die,
Yet I'd not rather not see
Any one of the three
Than be banished for ever from Skye.

SO sang Sheriff Alexander Nicolson, Skyeman, poet and mountaineer, whose christian name is commemorated in Sgùrr Alasdair, Alexander's Peak, the highest of that grand mountain range, the Black Cuillin.

Skye is the greatest of the Hebrides. By road from Sleat in the south to Duntuilm in the north is a distance of more than seventy miles—considerably farther than from Edinburgh to England. Yet, so deeply is the island penetrated by the sea lochs and fjords of the Atlantic, it is said no house in Skye is more than four miles from the sea.

Of old Skye was named the Winged Isle, because of its broad, wing-like promontories, Vaternish, Duirinish and Trotternish. They all bear Norse names, for the Norse ruled in Skye up to the year 1263, and even at the present day most of the Skye place names are of Norwegian origin. The village of Kyleakin bears the name of the great King Haco who, with his strong fleet of war galleys, sailed through the strait which separates Skye from the mainland and came to anchor beside the Carlin Rock, awaiting the turn of the tide in the sea strait of Kylerhea, where the Atlantic twice

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each day rushes through a narrow sea passage at a speed of seven knots at the height of the spring tides. That great sea expedition of King Haco was in the year 1263, in the autumn of which he fought the inconclusive action with the King of Scots at the Battle of Largs. At a later date came a young and romantic figure who had played for a high stake and had lost everything when success seemed within his grasp, Prince Charles Edward.

IN my mind often arises the picture of that misty June morning in the year 1746 when the Prince, with Flora MacDonald as his guide, sighted the promontory of Vaternish after an all night passage in an open boat from South Uist in the Outer Hebrides. The Prince was then a fugitive, with a reward of thirty thousand pounds on his head. He had lost the kingdom for which he had fought, and had brought death or exile upon many a Highland chief. He had now eluded the government ships of war which patrolled the Minch in search for him, and on seeing Skye, his goal for the time being, his heart may have become lighter. But Vaternish was MacLeod's Country, and MacLeod had chosen to side with the Hanoverians against him. In the fog those in the small boat may have been uncertain of their bearings, but they quickly realized that the shore was hostile when MacLeod's Militia, on watch on Ardmore Point, sent a shower of bullets at the small craft. The militia had three boats at anchor near the coast at Ardmore Bay but when all seemed lost a sea fog hid the Prince's boat in its friendly cloak. The fugitives could hear the excited cries of those on shore and in the boats, which hurriedly began to weigh anchor. Then the wind died to a calm, and in that friendly calm and thick ocean mist those who rowed the Prince's boat were able to make their escape. That escape had been a narrow one.

They now set their course for the neighbouring promontory of Trotternish, whither they had originally been bound. Trotternish was MacDonald territory. MacDonald of the Isles, like MacLeod of Dunvegan had, though with little enthusiasm, taken arms

against the Prince, but his wife, the Lady Margaret MacDonald, was at heart a Jacobite, and her kinswoman, Flora MacDonald, was risking a visit to her, in order to enlist her aid in getting the Prince safely out of Skye, and at a later day to the friendly land of France.

A few notes on the ancestry of Flora MacDonald may not be out of place here. She was the daughter of Ronald MacDonald styled "of Milton" in South Uist, by his wife Marion, daughter of Rev. Angus MacDonald, minister of South Uist, by a daughter of Angus MacDonald, counted as ninth of Largie in Kintyre whose family, the MacDonalds of Largie, still own the old property which looks out to Jura and Islay from the fertile coast of Kintyre.

Flora MacDonald's paternal grandfather was Angus MacDonald, styled "of Milton", a younger son of Ronald MacDonald, first of Benbecula, the immediate younger brother of Sir Donald MacDonald, Captain of Clanranald (presumably by his wife Margaret, daughter of Angus MacDonald of Dunyveg and the Glens) who carried on a devastating feud with the MacLeans of Duart.

FLORA MacDonald was born in 1722. Her father died while she was still a child. She had two brothers, Ranald, who was accidentally shot on the island of Cara in Argyll (this small isle belonged and still belongs to the Largie family) and Angus, who succeeded to the Tack of Milton in South Uist.

Guided by Neil MacEachain, Prince Charles Edward and Captain O'Neill had crossed the hills from their hiding place below Hecla and met Flora MacDonald on 21st June, 1746, in the half-light of a Hebridean summer night at the shieling of Olasary on the farm of Milton. She was asked whether she could help the Prince, who had been for three weeks in hiding in a cave in the hills on the east side of South Uist, to make his escape to Skye. Flora was renowned for her kindness of heart, but the main reason she was asked to help may have been because her step-father commanded the militia then stationed in Benbecula, and was also what would now be termed chiefpassport officer. No one in 1746 was permitted to leave South Uist (or indeed any other Hebridean island) without a passport. She willingly consented to help, and at once set out for Benbecula. At the South Ford, separating South Uist from Benbecula, she was arrested by the militia, and refused to answer any questions until she should see their captain. Her step-father, Hugh MacDonald of Armadale, was at heart favourable to the Prince's cause, and when she told him her errand he made out a passport, for herself, a man servant (Neil MacEachain) and Betty Burke, "a good spinster" (the Prince). Flora immediately made her way to Clanranald's house at Nunton, in Benbecula, where the Lady Clanranald supplied a flowered linen gown, a white apron, and other clothing, for the Prince's disguise. Those in the boat with Flora MacDonald and the Prince on the rough crossing of the Minch to Skye were Neil MacEachain, Duncan Campbell MacRuaraidh and Alexander MacDonald. At the helm was John MacDonald (Glenalladale).

After their narrow escape from capture at Ardmore Bay, Vaternish, the men rowed in mist across the broad mouth of Loch Snisort, and landed at a small shingly cove at Kilbride, below Monkstat in Trotternish. Although they did not know it, danger still threatened them, for a small detachment of militia under the command of Lieutenant Alexander MacLeod, younger of Balmeanach, were stationed in the neighbourhood. It was a Sunday morning, and the commanding officer was at church: in his absence the militiamen were keeping only a perfunctory look out, and the boat was not sighted. On landing, Flora MacDonald and Neil MacEachain, leaving the Prince out of sight near the shore, went to Monkstat House, the home at that time of the MacDonalds of the Isles. MacDonald himself was from home, serving in the government forces. Flora knew that his wife, a lady greatly loved in Skye, the Lady Margaret MacDonald, was at heart favourably disposed toward the Prince. She had therefore sent Lady Margaret a message, which had

been delivered to her the previous day by Mrs. MacDonald of Kirkibost, North Uist, informing her of her approaching visit to Skye and the reason for it. It so happened that Lieut. MacLeod, the officer in command of the militia, was actually in Monkstat House when Flora arrived. This made her errand the more difficult, yet she was able to disarm his suspicions while Donald Roy MacDonald and MacDonald of Kingsburgh, both devoted followers of the Prince, discussed outside the house the best means of taking Prince Charlie through the Isle of Skye. It was decided to convey him to the island of Raasay, to be under the care of MacLeod of Raasay who, unlike MacLeod of Dunvegan, had taken up arms for the Prince and had suffered accordingly. That day the Prince, dressed as Betty Burke, walked the ten miles which separates Monkstat from Kingsburgh, and stayed there the night, continuing his journey next morning to Portree. It was late in the evening, and very wet, when the Prince with his small party of faithful friends arrived at Portree, where they rested for two hours at the inn, now known as the Royal Hotel. Very early in the morning they set out for Raasay in a small boat. There was found no one who would betray the Prince for the sum of £30,000—and it must be remembered that £30,000 in those days was worth perhaps £90,000 at the present day. During his time of hiding the people were careful to avoid mentioning the Prince by name, even in conversation among themselves, lest they should be overheard. The name by which he was always known was Morag, of which the English equivalent is Sarah.

THE Isle of Skye had already been stirred by the first Jacobite rising in 1715. A leading figure in that rising was Sir Donald MacDonald of the Isles, known to the islesmen as Domhnall a' Cogaidh, Donald of the War. At that time the MacDonalds lived in their castle at Duntuilm, on the north-west edge of the north wing of Skye, and before leaving his home to take part in the rising Sir Donald buried his title deeds on a small member of the Fladday Chuain island group, known as Bord Cruinn, the Round Table. The island group lie in the Minch, between the north of Skye and Harris. A watchman was placed on the small isle: the only access was by a narrow pass, and in those days it would have been possible for a single man to have defended the isle against a landing party, for the pass of access was broad enough to permit of only one man at a time making his way through it. The grass-grown ruins of the watchman's house can still be seen.

Duntuilm Castle, where the MacDonald's lived before moving to Monkstat, was abandoned, some say, because the ghost of a member of the family, Donald Gorm, made himself unpleasant. Another tradition is that the family left it after a child had fallen from one of the windows over the cliff to its death. There seems indeed to be no satisfactory reason for the abandonment of the castle, built on the site of a still more ancient "dun" on a magnificent site, overlooking the sea from the very edge of a cliff. The site of the old garden is still visible: the soil which forms it is said to have been brought from seven kingdoms—England, Ireland, Norway, France, Spain, Germany and Denmark. It must be remembered that in old days the sea was the road to the Isles, and the war galleys of a Highland chief ranged far. The hollow, dug out of the rock, where the galleys were drawn up, can be seen beneath the castle: it is still used by the local fishermen for their boats.

IN those days the Isle of Skye was divided amongst three great Highland families, the MacDonalds, the MacLeods and the MacKinnons. Of the three, two still hold at all events part of their ancestral lands. The MacLeods of Dunvegan, or as they are now called the MacLeods of MacLeod, still live in their ancestral castle of Dunvegan which has claims to being the oldest inhabited castle in the Highlands or Islands. Duirinish, the west wing of Skye, still bears the name MacLeod's Country and the high, flat-topped hills which overlook the castle are still named MacLeod's Tables. At the castle of Dunvegan is kept the Fairy Flag, captured, it is said, by one of the

MacLeod's during a crusade, whose miraculous property it was to increase the number of the MacLeod's seven-fold in the eyes of the enemy when unfurled in a fight. Samuel Johnson, Sir Walter Scott and other distinguished visitors have stayed at the castle, which still receives MacLeods from all over the world—men and women proud to claim membership of a great Highland clan from their distant homes in foreign lands.

The MacLeods still own the larger part of the Cuillin hills, which are renowned because of the opportunities they give for a rock climber to exercise his skill, and also because of their unsurpassed views. The sharp peaks of the Cuillin rise in a crowded, yet majestic company. The various peaks closely approach one another in height, Sgùrr Alasdair being just over 3,300 feet above the Atlantic which breaks at its foot. On a clear day from the high tops of the Cuillin the view west is of unusual beauty. Islands at a great distance are clear, and I have frequently seen St. Kilda, which is ninety-five miles distant from the Cuillin range. On a day at the end of October in the year 1947 the view to the south was of exceptional clearness. The low sun was turning to gold the Sound of Iona seventy miles to the south and I saw the birth of a small cloud on the slopes of Ben More, on the equally distant Isle of Mull. A little later I saw the sun break through the clouds and shine on the high precipices of St. Kilda. The Cuillin often attract to themselves a cloud canopy when the country around is in clear sunshine; their dark rock walls are then the more austere by reason of the flood of light which surrounds them.

THERE are deer on the Cuillin, and hardy black-faced sheep pasture to some of the highest tops. Like the ptarmigan, the mountain hare has become scarcer of recent years. On the high hills of the Outer Hebrides the ptarmigan has become extinct; it would seem as if a like fate may overtake it on the Cuillin, where it is possible to climb for days without seeing one of these hardy birds, in summer white-winged, in winter as white as the snowy wastes which are their home. The golden eagle sails above the high tops of the Cuillin, or sweeps grandly across the rocky face of some steep slope, and after its nesting cares are over the raven may perch on some rocky pinnacle where the view is wide—but in the nesting season the raven frequents lower levels.

I have mentioned that Kyleakin takes its name from an old Norse king. At Kyleakin stands an ancient ruin, Castle Maoil, said to have been the home of a Norse princess before it was a strong-hold of the Mac-Kinnons. There is a tradition that the Norse princess who lived in the castle had a chain stretched across the sound, and levied toll on all ships which passed. A small rock on the shore beneath Kyle House is said to be where one end of the chain was fastened: there is certainly a "waist" on the pillar which might have been made by a chain.

NEW days are coming to Skye. We are promised a great hydro-electric scheme which will give electric light to each crofter on the isle. Yet even greater benefits would be a supply of running water to the houses, and good, or at all events passable roads to each crofting community. At present there are houses to which no road leads, and where in winter the approach is so wet that the only foot gear to keep the feet dry are Wellington boots, During the war money was poured out in Skye, some of it on necessary projects, some of it on unnecessary work. The crofters saw that money was then being spent lavishly: they hoped that when war was over they, and their sons and daughters who returned from war service, might at all events be given passable roads to their houses: so far their hopes have been in vain.

The population of Skye numbers around ten thousand, of which a thousand live in Portree, the capital of the island, to which there is a steamer service each week-day from the two mainland ports, Mallaig on the West Highland Railway, and Kyle of Lochalsh on the L.M.S. Railway.

Most of the inhabitants of the island are crofters. A crofter holds his land in perpetuity, paying an annual rent to the landowner. In size a croft varies greatly, but

the crofters' source of livelihood is always the rearing of store cattle. Some crofters implement their livelihood from the crofts by lobster fishing. The fishing of white fish was badly hit by illegal trawling during the war years; the result of this is seen in the smaller number of fish now on the grounds.

A NEW problem has arisen for the lobster fishermen—motor boats from the mainland have begun, during recent years, to fish lobsters on the local men's grounds. These motor boats, being larger and stronger than the local boats, are able to put to sea and lift their creels in weather which keeps the local boats in harbour. The shore permits the setting of only a limited number of lobster creels, and thus the local lobster fishermen are suffering. There is room for great improvement in the method of fish transport. At present the lobsters are sent off, by boat and train, to the market at Billingsgate, at which place, after their long journey, they often arrive dead in hot weather, or frozen during frost. A lobster which arrives lifeless at the market is worth nothing, and thus at times a week's fishing is completely lost. If the fishermen of the Isle of Skye and the other Hebrides were to combine, it should be possible to charter a flying boat which might call at different places, load up with lobsters, and reach the south markets in four hours. This would mean a saving of at least twenty-four hours from Skye and several days from the Outer Hebrides.

An old industry, which is now being revived (it had ended some years before the beginning of the second world war) is the gathering of sea ware for the extraction of iodine and other substances from it. So far this industry has not been revived in Skye, but is now being carried on with success on the neighbouring island of South Uist.

Short Story

ONE BOY, ONE DRUM

By VERNON HEATON

PAUL LEVARRE set his drum down in the deep snow and seated himself on top of it. He was tired beyond belief, cold to the point of numbness and hungry in the extreme. His greatcoat, too large for the fourteen-year-old drummer-boy, was sodden with snow and almost heavier than his shoulders could bear, his feet were chilled until there was no feeling in them, and they seemed no more than a leaden weight attached to his legs; his hands were almost frozen, but they still clutched the drumsticks that had helped to beat the 37th Regiment of Infantry from Paris to Moscow, and back again from the burning city, in retreat, with the rest of Napoleon's Army.

As he looked about him in dejection, he saw the limitless, snow-bound plains rolling into the distance on either side. To his rear, the remnants of the once proud battalion, now decimated by the ravages of their long march over barren land deep in snow with few supplies and cut up by the raiding tactics of the Cossacks, as they harried the retreating French, met his gaze.

The Colonel of the battalion lay in the snow close by the boy. His horse had died under him the day before, and beyond him, scores of men lay prone in the last stages of exhaustion, their arms and greatcoats often abandoned in their desperate struggle to reach safety from the pursuing Russians. Still farther behind, Paul could see dozens more of the uniformed figures stretching in a long, ragged procession as far as the eye could see. Some of the men were still moving forward to the comparative safety of the main body of the battalion, others dragging along blindly with their minds too dulled by their privations to give thought to the dangers behind them, and yet others, almost buried in the snow where they had collapsed, few of whom would ever rise again, leaving a well-marked trail back to the gates of the city they had sacked and then abandoned.

PAUL LEVARRE had left his Mother and France nearly a year ago to help Napoleon to conquer Muscovy. To-day, with his pride still unbroken but his illusions gone for ever, he still remained at his post at the head of his Regiment, conscious of his duty to beat them forward on the march.

The Colonel did not dare to rest his men for long. As it was, far too many were being embraced by the peaceful last sleep of exhaustion and the soft, deadly snow, and with a glance from his dark-ringed eyes, he signalled the drummer boy to sound the "march" once again.

IT took some moments of mental effort for the boy to understand the command and then he rose to his feet, his almost frozen uniform crackling about him, and with a pull at his courage, he hitched his drum into place. Raising his drumsticks, he turned his face towards the still distant Poland, and then crashed them home on the taughtened pig-skin in a resounding call to the battalion.

For some minutes the drummer continued his tattoo, knowing that it would take a little time before the sound penetrated the dulled minds of the men sufficiently to bring them to their feet again.

Slowly, heads were raised from the snow and the more hardy rose to their feet helping their comrades to rise beside them, but many were unable to move and lay where they had fallen, waiting for the last sleep they would ever know. To the rear, the sound of the drum acted as a spur to the stragglers and they dragged their leaden feet forward more purposefully.

Suddenly, the call of the drum changed to a slow march and the drummer boy stepped forward, urging on the weary troops and beating a *requiem* for their too exhausted comrades half buried in the snow that was to be their burial ground.

AS the 37th Regiment moved forward, slowly and painfully, a declivity on their left produced a line of horse drawn supply wagons, pulled by jaded, hungry animals and marshalled by a patrol of equally dis-

pirited troops, and as the two parties converged on one another, Paul saw that the wagons contained stacks of wounded soldiers, and glancing to the rear of the column, he saw yet another trail of fallen men and abandoned equipment, marking the retreat of one more section of Napoleon's defeated army.

Wordlessly the ambulance wagons joined the column behind the drum, the only sound to be heard over the vast snow-deadened countryside.

At last, a gleam of water ahead attracted the boy's attention, and realizing only that a change of scenery was ahead, increased the tempo of his beat as he strode forward anxiously.

AN hour later, the ragged soldiery together with the horse-drawn wagons, reached the banks of a broad river that seemed to cleave the white snow with a black band. Looking both upstream and downstream over the vast distances open to their view, they could see no bridge by which to make a crossing. As the drum ceased its beat and the troops gradually converged on the river's bank, the Colonel looked about him in dismay. The river was over a hundred yards in width, and though the banks sloped gently down towards the river on either side, it appeared an impassable barrier. Only the speed of the river's flow saved it from being frozen right across, but where it was checked by the banks, the water froze into thin sheets of ice. To struggle through it was a task beyond the capacity of the men, and without aid, they would drown as the icy cold water cramped their limbs.

The Colonel glanced up at the sun, now low in the sky towards the west, and his brow furrowed as he realized that it was almost time for the usual evening's raid by the marauding Cossacks. With their backs to the river, most of their arms and accoutrements long since abandoned and in their weak condition, destruction was certain, unless they could place the river as a barrier between their foes and themselves. No material was available to manufacture a bridge, but the Officer's eye fell, speculatively, on the baggage wagons full of wounded men. If he could get the wagons into the river in a long line, it might be possible to provide a fordable foothold so long as the river was not too deep. He had no means of judging the depth of the water, but this seemed their last, and only chance of escaping to the mild security of the far bank.

As the Colonel moved back towards the pack wagons, he searched for their officer, but after enquiring from the men without avail, decided that the decision was in his hands.

THE Commander ordered the removal of the wounded from the wagons and their disposal on the snow, to one side. The men, though dulled by the extremes of weariness and yet seeking for any straw to aid their flight from the Russians, looked up at the Colonel in momentary bewilderment at the apparent brutality of the order, but the Officer repeated his instructions in more forcible language. He was well aware that few, if any of the wounded men would survive the cold snow as their couch, but by abandoning them to their fate, he believed that some faint spark of hope remained for the fit, while to hesitate over such a dreadful decision would mean the certain extermination of the whole body of troops.

Slowly and with care, the wounded were laid in the snow, and then the Colonel ordered the horses to be taken from the foremost wagon and a party of men to take their places at the shafts, and at the rear, knowing that he must lose many more of his men in the water before the wagons could be got into place.

The Commander gave the order to push the wagons down to the river's bank, but bedded down to its axles in the deep snow, the burden proved too great for his weakened men. Under the lash of the Officer's tongue, the men struggled more and more desperately, but the wheels could not be turned and man after man fell into the snow from exhaustion, until the order to halt was given.

A moment's thought, and the Colonel gave instructions to replace the horses in the shafts and for one driver to mount the wagon to wield the whip, though he was

fairly certain that the animals would baulk at entering the cold water, but this was their last faint hope and he must try it.

PAUL LEVARRE sat on his drum watching the Commander's efforts to get the men across the river. His youthful wits seemed less affected by the fatiguing retreat than those of the older men, and he understood the intentions of his Officer. He watched the horses as they were driven forward, towing their burden behind them, to the brink of the water, and he watched eagerly as the driver tried to flog the beasts into the river. The whip proved ineffective on the terrified animals, and with a sinking heart the boy realized that his hopes of escape were almost gone.

Paul sat with his head drooping into his chest in an agony of despair, the sound of the cracking whip and the invectives of the driver sounding only dimly in his ears, when a sudden thought came to his mind and his head jerked upwards once again.

The horses were all trained to war, and though they were almost at the end of their endurance, the drummer boy believed he knew a way to bring that last needed ounce of courage to their failing hearts. Rising to his feet, he hitched his drum into place once again and then, slowly at first, he began to beat the "attention". Some moments passed before the call penetrated the brains of the tired animals, but at last, seeing the horses' heads slowly come up again, Paul turned towards the river, changed his beat to the roll of the "march", and strode slowly forward to the tempo he had set.

As he moved up in front of the wagon, the horses responded to his summons on the drum, and as he set his steps into the swirling waters, the first team began to follow. Immediately, the other wagons followed in line astern, and as Paul moved farther out into the river, the wagons and their drivers were drawn out after him.

AS the Colonel watched the advance from the river's bank, renewed hope clutched at his breast. If the river was not too deep and if the drummer boy could keep the animals moving forward, the bridge might yet be formed.

Calling a hasty order to the drivers, the Commander watched the stream of vehicles trundle out behind the drum, and as the drummer was lost to sight at the head of the procession, the roll of his drum faded into the rising noise of the clatter of wheels and the splashing of hoofs as wagon after wagon entered the river, and at the same time a rising chorus of hope rose from the throats of the men who now understood the intent.

After a wait that seemed an eternity to the Colonel, he saw above the serpent of vehicles, the first wagon rise upwards as it started to take the bank on the opposite side of the river and a sigh of relief burst from his lips, followed a moment later by a sharp crack as the leading driver shot his horses in their tracks, so that his wagon should remain in place as the most distant plank in the bridge. Further shots sounded on the air as each wagon piled up against the one in front of it until the bridge stretched from bank to bank.

At the Officer's order, the anxious troops streamed across the makeshift bridge to the safety of the far bank. As the last man left the near side of the river, he followed him up on to the partly submerged wagons. In the middle of the river, the Colonel saw that the vehicles were sunk to the tops of their sides, but at the worst, he found that with the firm planks beneath his feet, he had to wade to no greater depth than his knees before he himself was in safety, across the river.

THE Commander immediately sought for the hero of the crossing.

"The drummer boy?" he demanded of the soldier who had driven the first team across, directly behind the boy.

The man looked embarrassed for a moment and drooped his head.

"We were more than half-way across the river, Sir," he replied. "The boy was up to his neck in water, but he floated his drum in front of him and kept beating it until—I think it was cramp, Sir."

The Colonel's eyes misted over, as he turned his face back towards the river. For a few minutes he stood gazing sorrowfully down into the black waters, and then, stiffening himself, he raised his hand to his cap in a last tribute to a brave soldier.

NOTES FROM OVERSEAS

SOCIALISM IN CANADA

By W. E. GLADSTONE MURRAY*

SOCIALISM in Canada is relatively young. The people who transformed a forbidding wilderness into one of the world's chief trading nations did not take kindly to regimentation or Statism. Economic depression provided the impulse. In the early 'thirties some of the farmers of the Western prairies launched the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, known by its initials CCF. The idea at first was to combine farmers, industrial workers, and the middle class, thus isolating the "monopoly capitalists".

In 1943, the CCF secured thirty-four of the ninety seats of the Ontario Legislature, only four less than the Progressive Conservatives, who then formed a precarious Administration. In 1944 the CCF came to power in the Province of Saskatchewan, replacing the Liberals. Then the CCF gained ground in Alberta, with a quarter of the total vote. In the same period the CCF became the official Opposition to Liberal-Conservative coalitions both in British Columbia and in Manitoba. Thus the CCF felt with some justification that they were marching into the sunrise with banners flying. And then the success of the British Labour Party in 1945 enhanced their prestige and prospects.

And so the CCF, under the leadership of Mr. M. J. Coldwell, a native of Devon, sought "to bring into being a Canada of security and justice and a world of lasting peace". Taking their cue from England, the CCF advocated the provision of full employment and social security by retaining and expanding in peace-time the regimentation and the controls of the war period.

The CCF hailed 1945 as their year of destiny. But imitation of British Labour did not yield the expected dividends. At the Federal Election of 1945, in a House of two hundred and forty-five members, the CCF secured twenty-nine seats as compared with twelve in the previous Parliament. The Ontario Election of 1945 reduced the CCF representation in a Legislature of ninety members from thirty-four to eight. It was clear the Canadian people were not yet ready for Socialism.

BY 1948 the CCF had succeeded in wooing a powerful section of organized labour—the Unions of the Canadian Congress of Labour, affiliated to the CIO in the United States. For the first time in Canadian politics, trades unions committed themselves to one political party. Also in most constituencies there was active help from the Communists, operating through their Canadian front, the Labour-Progressive Party. There were tests of strength in five Provinces. In Ontario CCF membership rallied from eight to twenty-two in a Legislature of ninety. On the other hand, in Alberta, the CCF were virtually wiped out; they failed to secure a foothold in Quebec, and they made no impression in New Brunswick. In Saskatchewan, where the CCF were in power, their representation was reduced from forty-seven to thirty-one in a Legislature of fifty-two members, the Liberals moving up from five to twenty.

Having failed to persuade Canadians to retain and extend war-time regimentation as the foundation of a Socialist economy, the CCF are now seeking to restore to "the people" the power that has been "usurped" by "monopoly capital". They advocate the State absorption of banking and basic industries, meaning transportation, mining,

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* *"First Public Relations Officer to the B.B.C., later Director of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and now leader of the Responsible Enterprise Movement in Canada."*

farm implements, insurance, steel and iron, and external trade. A National Planning Commission and an Investment Board would direct and supervise the centralized and regimented economy.

Formerly isolationist and anti-British, the CCF have now generated a new "Imperialism" in their advocacy of closer relations with the Commonwealth countries that are Socialist. Lukewarm support of ERP is balanced by a condemnation of Wall Street that is heartily applauded by Moscow. For the past two years the official Communist slogan for Canada has been "Elect a CCF Government at Ottawa". The Reds usually refrain from entering candidates where their intervention might damage the CCF. Such tenderness has not escaped the notice of the Liberals and the Progressive-Conservatives. So now the Communist slogan is changed to "Throw out the agents of warmongering Wall Street", meaning all non-Socialists. Thus the Reds continue to work for the CCF in all but the negligible proportion of constituencies where they have their own candidates.

Increasing dependence on organized labour is helping the CCF in the industrial areas but is alienating the farmers. The "on and off" relations of the CCF with the Communists, despite their family squabbles, have alarmed Catholic Quebec. Without some support in Quebec, no party can hope to gain a working majority at Ottawa.

THE attempt of the CCF to nourish a reputation for sweet reasonableness and "gradualism" has received a jolt from within the Party. Mr. E. A. Beder, a regular contributor to the "Canadian Forum", organ of the left-wing "intellectuals", contemptuously dismisses the CCF policy with its "makeshift bits and pieces" as "plain nonsense in the face of the world situation". Mr. Beder has discovered that just as Britain needs a surplus of imports, so Canada needs a surplus of exports. So he declares "if you have to depend upon the world market to maintain your economy, it is futile to speak of Socialism". Mr. Beder naturally does not want to encourage the market economy. His solution is a "closed economy" between a group of Socialist countries, taking in each other's washing, on the model of the "New Democracies" behind the Iron Curtain. Apparently the "New Imperialism" is to be broadened, so that all approved Socialist countries may integrate their economic structures to produce a balance both local and general. Implicit in this, of course, is a boycott of the United States and of any other countries that adhere to the market economy.

A cause of bitter disappointment to the Socialists as to the Communists is the failure of the market-economy to collapse, as prophesied by the Marxists. Speaking at Toronto in December before a meeting of the CCF University Federation, Mr. Coldwell declared that a period of economic distress was needed to give the CCF its chance to achieve power in Canada. In deploring the present prosperity, Mr. Coldwell looked forward with confidence to exploiting a future recession. As political tactics this is questionable. To invite widespread unemployment in order to try a dubious political experiment is hardly a compelling appeal to a democracy. Moreover, the Canadian people, or enough of them, are aware that economic depressions are due to world-wide conditions outside the control of any one country. To suggest that a drastic decline of Canada's foreign trade would be due to the failure of Capitalism at Ottawa, and could be set right by Socialism at Ottawa is to exploit distress with obvious cynicism.

Setbacks and mistakes, however, do not discourage the CCF. Drawing inspiration from Sidney Webb and the ILP, they are confident of ultimate success. Their Party organization is efficient and vigorous. Their leadership has a dominating ingredient of Rhodes Scholars of the vintage that absorbed the Fabian philosophy fashionable along the Isis between the Wars. Despite the obvious folly of inviting depression, the CCF will probably gain ground when the economic situation deteriorates. In any event, they can be counted upon to focus discontent. Nor should it be forgotten that the support of the Communists, although embarrassing in some ways, is, on balance, a source of strength. The Communists are going under-

ground in Canada, thereby enhancing the value of their cells which are carefully disposed in Trades Unions, in the Universities, and in some of the churches. To checkmate, the CCF will require continuous and widening effort.

WHEN the Canadian electors choose a new Parliament, probably this year, it will be against a background of prolonged prosperity and negligible unemployment, balancing inflated prices and the post-war scarcity of housing. Actually the immediate hope of the CCF is in the absence of a clear majority for either the Liberals or the Progressive-Conservatives, when the Socialists might hold the balance and dominate by manœuvre. While this prospect leaves out of account the practical certainty of the other parties co-operating . . . at least in the protection of the market-economy. . . . This procedure is not unwelcome to the CCF as presaging a clarified political realignment between Collectivists and Individualists.

The Liberals and the Progressive-Conservatives oppose Socialism in much the same way as their opposite numbers in the other democracies. Both advocate reforms and social security measures within a framework of freedom. Except during election campaigns these parties do not undertake economic education against the collectivists who, of course, are at work all the time.

It is left for industry and business to try to counter the continuous activity of the Socialists and the Communists. The Chamber of Commerce, Boards of Trade, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and other bodies wage active warfare against Communism. The battle against the CCF is conducted by various non-official organizations, notably the Responsible Enterprise Movement.

In the first flush of the Labour-Socialist victory in Britain, the CCF certainly bathed in reflected glory. But the study of British Socialism in practice is a "boomerang". For the past two years John Gloag's "Bulletins from Socialist Britain", widely distributed across the country, have undoubtedly influenced public opinion.

EXPERIENCE in Canada is that Socialism cannot be checked by purely negative and destructive propaganda. To fail to admit the defects of capitalism, and its misuse in the early stages of the Industrial Era is an error as grave as the Socialist attempt to suggest that all the early blemishes persist.

Socialism cannot gain power without making substantial inroads among the farmers and the middle elements of the population, physicians and surgeons, lawyers, accountants, shopkeepers, business agents, architects, clerks, teachers, clergy and ministers of religion, foremen, small business men and their assistants, and the wage-earners outside the Unions. The degree of success which the CCF enjoyed in 1943 and 1944 is directly attributable to invasion of these areas of opinion. At that time the Socialists were unchallenged. Then emerged the counter-attack of business and industry, and the much-advertised "Socialist trend" faltered. With the growing volume of evidence of what is happening to the middle elements of the population under Socialism in Britain, it became easier to arouse Canadians to a sense of danger.

The doctrine that halted the advance of Socialism in Canada and that still holds it at bay is easily summarized.

Real progress is measured in terms of the growth of individual freedom and opportunity. An inescapable lesson of history is that when men yield their personal freedom for promises that invariably turn out to be illusions, civilization declines. Where, as in Soviet Russia, the process is taken to its logical conclusion, individual freedom is obliterated and misery is the only reward except for the rulers and their agents.

A NOTE FOR T. S. ELIOT

By GEORGE BARKER

IT is becoming, at the beginning of this note, to express, no matter how modestly, some deference to that great poet whose sixtieth birthday was celebrated this September. I write this note for T. S. Eliot not because, in any remarks about contemporary poetry, he must be continually and honourably and even exclusively referred to, but because, since I was twenty-one—and that is fourteen years ago—I have been, in a small way, a friend of that very gentle man. This note is not an evaluation or a revaluation or an exigesis—because I have almost reached that stage, I discover, where the only serious form of criticism is simply an examination of the subject's personal charms. When I read books like *The Meaning of Meaning* or *The Foundations of Æsthetics* or *Archetypal Patterns in English Poetry*, I feel at a loss to account for the paucity of my response. And then I recollect that literature, in any and in all of its various forms, has got, at heart, only one subject. This is the human being. And what I find absent, or pretty well absent, from so much of the intellectually responsible criticism of English poetry, is its responsibility towards the human being. It is absolutely no good to address the fallible and the vulnerable and the human as though they were infallible and invulnerable and inhuman. And this is what happens if one addresses the human being as though he were made up of an impeccable intellect and a pair of old boots. In between the intellect and the old boots, a most remarkable phenomenon goes on enacting the comedies and tragedies of the great human passions. It is these human passions which, moving the intellect to offer them a sanctuary, reveal to us, in our poetry, in our paintings—in all the seven major arts—the privilege of being human. I am by no means seeking to deprecate the immense magnificence and the immense magnitude of intellectual interpretations. I see a great deal more latent excitement in the idea of the recurring seven than I ever could in a bunch of dilapidated dahlias. But the intellect, like a blank cheque, needs resources to meet its demands. And these resources, upon which the intellect calls and makes demands, are, in fact, the human passions. The matter upon which the intellect properly operates is not itself and its own propositions, but the matter of human affairs. In these human affairs intellectual issues certainly occupy a place, but a place subordinate to the imperative operancy of the human passions. I never knew a man who could think himself into happiness.

Eliot is a man whom the imperative operancy of the human passions has not left unannealed. It does not need to be said by me that those who suffer and endure in silence nevertheless both suffer and endure. I remember a sentence, and a tremendous pronouncement it is, that concludes Eliot's essay on Tradition and the Individual: "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion; but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotion know what it means to want to escape from them."

THIS sentence moves me very deeply because it leaves out so much more than it says, and it says a great deal. It tells us exactly what Yeats meant in between those two deadly lines:

> The best lack all conviction, and the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

But, unsaid, merely hinted at, unspoken, the anguish, the agony, the absolute tribulation of the human condition, this is expressed in the negative pathos of that concluding sentence of Eliot's. "But, of course, only those who have personality and emotion know what it mean to want to escape from them." For I have heard too many of the feeble-minded second-rate poetasters, full to the tooth of passionate intensity, accuse the poems of Eliot of a poverty of feeling. The reason is perfectly simple. His poems are

poems about passions that only an adult person experiences. They are not poems for adolescent poetry lovers with whom passion can only be compared to a primus stove. Why does Eliot love cats? It is because they are genteel during the day and diabolic during the night. Why does Eliot dress like a respectable publisher? It is not only because he is a respectable publisher but also because he really has got inside him a monster to disguise. This monster speaks exquisitely in the lines:

> The tiger in the tiger pit
> Is not more irritable than I.
> The whipping tail is not more still
> Than when I smell the enemy
> Writhing in the essential blood
> Or dangling from the friendly tree.
> When I lay bare the tooth of wit
> The hissing over the arched tongue
> Is more affectionate than hate,
> More bitter than the love of youth,
> And inaccessible by the young.
> Reflected from my golden eye
> The dullard knows that he is mad.
> Tell me if I am not glad!

BUT I must not give the impression that I am trying to interpret the personal character of Eliot through his idiosyncrasies or his poems. He is much more capable of doing this, if it should be required, than anyone else will ever be. When it comes down to the interpretation of any given poet, it is necessary to recall that the poet himself is in a very advantageous position. He is his own subject. It can therefore be assumed that he tells you as much about himself as he thinks wise and nice. But, whereas the poet may know all there is to know about the man—the human being—he knows very little about the poet inside himself. For the poet inside a man can only function on a single subject, and this is the poem he writes. This is why the opinion of poets on such matters as the political issues of the times is really of no more significance or sagacity than the opinion of an intelligent bookmaker. Unless, of course, the poet happens also to be an intelligent man. In which case he ought to have more sense than to be a poet.

Some two or three months before the declaration of war I went to see Eliot in his little office overlooking the gardens of Russell Square. It was late in the afternoon and there was about everything that atmosphere of resigned melancholy that seems to precede all catastrophic events. I forget what was the occasion of my calling upon him—I think it was to say good-bye, for I was leaving England. He looked out of the window. And, after a while, in a tired voice, he said: "We have so very little time." I never knew whether he was referring to that interview or to more general matters: I do not think he wished me to know. But it remains in my mind because it is almost the only occasion on which I have heard the poet Eliot speak through the man.

And when I was twenty or twenty-one I used to call and see him whenever I visited London from the southern county in which I lived. And he would enquire about my dog and advise me on the planting of potatoes and warn me not to cudgel my brains for poems. But for the most part he spoke to me about matters of infinitely more service to me than the technique of English versification (for this, he knew, I would learn if I were able). He concerned himself with the problems of how the devil I was to get some money whilst I tried to learn how to write good verse. I speak of these personal matters because the occasion of his sixtieth birthday is an opportune time to remember that Eliot is not only a great poet who redeems this time from mediocrity: he is also a man.

In the highly distinguished history of English literary criticism three figures stand out in superlative prominence. These are Dryden, Coleridge and Matthew Arnold. To these three names, in its proper season, I believe the name of Eliot may be added. For he has restored to that almost discredited art, the art of literary criticism, some of the intellectual responsibility and some of the etymological veracity that his immediate predecessors had sacrificed or degraded. I do not think that he is an inceptor. Few of the critical propositions upon which he establishes his theories have, for me, very much that is new about them. The kind of innovations Coleridge introduced into English critical thinking were in truth revolutionary. For Coleridge invested us with our intellectual self-consciousness. Before him, the English critics, even the most hard-

headed, men like Johnson and Dryden, laboured about in an atmosphere in which the fundamental assumptions were uncertain and obscure. Coleridge introduced the lightning. And what it revealed was not at all as neat a scene as either Dryden or Johnson confidently imply. I speculate on Doctor Johnson's response to those lines of Gerard Hopkins which would, I suspect, have so delighted Coleridge:

> The mind, the mind has mountains, cliffs of fall
> Sheer, no man fathomed.

For, since Coleridge, it has been absolutely impossible to disregard the presence of these precipices both in the work of art and in the work of criticism: these precipices which are inhabited by monsters whom it is the special operation of a poem to tame. These things, these otherwise indescribable denizens of the human imagination, were first discovered as subjects of critical and scientific analysis, by Coleridge. (But they had always been the subject of the work of art.) For this reason Coleridge is the first great English critic. I would almost say that he showed the poem that it was capable of original sin. I do not think Matthew Arnold fulfilled any such eminent destiny in the history of English criticism: he was as utterly incapable of making Coleridge's mistakes as he was incapable of equalling Coleridge's innovations. But he did remind the poet that his vocation involved wrestling with both angels and monsters: I take this to be the meaning of his forgivably pedagogic remark: "Poetry is at bottom a criticism of life." And this quotation brings me to Eliot, whose comment on this remark of Arnold's was: "At bottom? That is a great way down. The bottom is the bottom. At the bottom of the abyss is what few ever see, and what those cannot bear to look at for long; and it is not a criticism of life." Perhaps none of us have ever been there, down where the ultimates exist in their mystery: but I believe that Eliot has been deeper down than Arnold. I believe this because I see in Matthew Arnold's substitution of poetry for religion, I see, here, only the debilitation of his religious passion. Only an anæmic spirit could seek to substitute poetry for its aspirations towards the divine union. And because Arnold is weaker in spirit he has not descended so far into the abyss as those who acknowledge the secularity of poetic consolation. But, in defence of Arnold, it should be said that, bottom or no bottom, the sentence, "poetry is a criticism of life" strikes most of us as a better statement than that statement made by Eliot many years ago: "Poetry is a superior amusement." But between Eliot and Matthew Arnold one is between the devil and the deep blue.

IN spite of the apparent originality of many of his poems and the less apparent originality of many of his critical judgments, Eliot is not an inceptor. What characteristics of the original his poems display—and The Love Song of Alfred Prufrock seemed inexcusably original in its day—these characteristics were really nothing other than a judicious pilfering of French sauces. It was not the originality of a man like William Blake, who invented a new way of writing because he had new subjects to speak about. These remarks are, of course, in no way a derogation of Eliot as a poet or as a critic: it is not a condition of things that all good poets should be violently original. I remember that William Shakespeare addressed a sonnet to himself asking why he did not turn to new found methods and to compounds strange. But it is salutary to try to clear out of the way some of the false impressions that either are or have been current about the work of Eliot. And just as his apparent originality as a poet is merely a glance he took across the English Channel, so his distinction as a critic is that he has very deliberately elected to follow the traditional evolution of English criticism. The difference between the poet Eliot and the poet Matthew Arnold is that Eliot practises what he preaches and Matthew Arnold just preaches. A poem like "Ash Wednesday" could walk around and hold up its head in almost all of the civilized European countries: it is not insular. But I suspect that even such a supremely beautiful poem as "The Scholar Gypsy" would suffer all sorts of embarrassing misunderstandings if it went and displayed its beauties at a bull fight in Barcelona. The point I wish to make is perfectly simple.

Eliot is catholic. He is not parochial. Matthew Arnold is parochial. He is not catholic. And I am using the word catholic in its secular rather than its ecclesiastical meaning, although I do not think these two meanings can be entirely separated.

IT is not a frivolous accident of nature that Eliot is a member of the Anglo-Catholic Church. (I write as a Roman or Real Catholic when I speculate that only his membership of the Anglo rather than the Roman Catholic Church obstructs his complete catholicity.) This is why, when poor Matthew Arnold makes a seemingly innocent remark like: "Poetry is at bottom a criticism of life," the catholic Eliot seizes it and imposes a theological interpretation upon the most unlikely word in the whole sentence: the word "bottom" is made to refer to the great Abyss. The explanation, of course, is quite simple. Arnold, for all his conscience and all his ethics and all his whitewashed morals, was not a man with any great pressure of religious passion. He suffered from anæmia of the spirit. And this anæmia of the spirit is the counterpart of his intellectual parochiality. His obsession with morals does not arise, like Eliot's, from a conviction that the mad troglodytes of the human passions are so dangerous that they must be kept chained up in moral systems: Arnold's obsession with morals arises from a simple habit of domestication: he likes to see tame animals with tame emotions behaving tamely because it looks much nicer. This is what he would have termed the Hellenic practice of moderation. I sometimes wonder what Arnold's response would have been if, one night as he pulled back the sheets of his bed he had found the incestuous Clytemnestra coiling there. We know what Eliot's response would have been. It is *The Family Reunion*.

I add a word more about Eliot's religious convictions, because I believe that any comments about him which did not discuss these convictions at some length, would amount to no more than superficial whimsy. At the dead centre of Eliot is a dark confessional into which, as I believe, none of his poems has ever entered and from which, most certainly, none has ever emerged. Because Eliot in no way interchanged the operations of the poem and the operations of the spirit. Poems are very pretty things indeed, but in the presence of the seven great orthodox damnations they take on as little significance as the handful of flowers we sometimes place upon altars. To Eliot, I think, the substitution of poetry for religion (whatever this may mean) could only seem as benighted and as purblind as to venerate the bunch of roses rather than the deity these flowers are placed there to glorify.

IT is absolutely no good to try and separate the poet in Eliot from the religious man. One so often—I have so often—overhears young men—usually young socialists—divide Eliot in two parts so that they can admire the poet and deplore the Christian. This can no more be done than you can back the Derby winner but deprecate the fact that the wretched beast is a horse. Eliot is the kind and type of poet he is for the demonstrable reason that his poems arise from his religious convictions. You may be able to establish a distinction between the poet in Eliot and the human being in Eliot, but you cannot establish a distinction between the poet in him and the Christian in him. The poet—in Eliot or any other poet—may be sitting with wings folded inside the human being who is going for a walk or talking or taking a drink. But the moment the poet unfolds his faculties and speaks, then each of his various natures get together, unite, and, in the poem, utter praise.

I said: "At the dead centre of Eliot is a dark confessional into which none of his poems has ever entered and from which none of his poems has ever emerged." This is because the poet cannot write without the benediction of the spiritual man, but the spiritual man can pray without the permission of the poet. Somewhere or other, Eliot points out the rareness of good devotional poetry. The explanation, I think, is because the poetic impulse, rare as it is, nevertheless is more common than religious passion. And rarest of all is the meeting of both inside a single skin.

STANDSTILL BUDGET?

By J. R. APPLEBEY

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS first budget was framed against the background of an inflationary monetary situation at home and the prospect of a reduction in the external deficit. Except in so far as it was due to the Special Contribution, the size of the surplus was generally regarded as adequate, and the whole budget a courageous attempt to deal with the country's problems. This year the deficit will be still further reduced (partly by the balance of unrequited exports against unrequited imports). There is evidence that, after a check, monetary inflation is again gathering force. And it would appear, at first sight at any rate, that logic will drive the Chancellor either to seek a still larger surplus, or to swallow his pride and allow the rate of interest to rise.

On closer examination, however, neither of these courses is likely to appeal to him. A larger surplus involves either a reduction in expenditure or an increase in taxation. Reduced expenditure, though it has been urged by the Bank Chairmen, would be practicable only if food subsidies could be reduced—a political impossibility; increased taxation would be inconsistent with the drive for increased production. And a rise in interest rates is a heresy which even City opinion does not now entirely condone. But beside his natural distaste, more than a hint has been dropped that, in spite of everything, the degree of disinflation achieved last year is regarded as sufficient. The success of the export drive is admitted. De-rationing where it has taken place has not revealed an unhealthy excess of purchasing power. And it is principally the failure to redistribute labour that is counted against the budget by its critics. But does this failure, it is being asked, really matter so much after all? Is it not a blessing in disguise? Organization for European Economic Co-operation has pointed out the danger of over-investment in Textiles. Rising coal output on the continent and memories of Polish competition between the wars are a reminder of how narrow is the margin between shortage and surplus. And Sir Stafford has himself said that he regards recruitment to Agriculture as sufficient. Manpower targets are noticeably at a discount. And interest and inclination may well be guiding the Chancellor's steps towards a "standstill" surplus.

WHAT is in the front of the Chancellor's mind is probably not the size of the surplus, but the possibility of shifting some of the burdens from one taxpayer to another. He is manifestly under pressure from at least two organized bodies of opinion to give some relief. And he may well regard himself as owing something to the unorganized multitude, which in the not so distant future will reappear as the not so unorganized electorate. The case for increasing children's allowances for one example is strong; and before he disinherits the unborn children of 1949 an echo of Ruddigore may steal into his mind. "I may be a bold bad bart:" one fancies him murmuring "but not such a bold bad bart: as all that".

His problem is to strike the balance between political interest and economic necessity. Both political parties are aware that the cost of living is one of the principal issues in the eyes of the voters. And as the election approaches the Chancellor will be under strong pressure from his party to distribute some uncovenanted benefits through his budget. But these benefits he can scarcely justify to himself in view of the economic state of the country. Much stronger from this point of view is the claim of industry that if it is to increase productivity at the required rate some of the taxation of company profits must beabated—at least the taxation of that part of "profit" which is a disguised form of capital expenditure.

SIR STAFFORD has shown himself unwilling to give in to party pressure where his economic sense tells him it would be short-sighted to do so. On the other hand, he is a realist and he will find it hard to make concessions to industry, however necessary, while imposing unrelieved austerity on the consumer. A spectacular budget is unlikely; but it should be full of interest.

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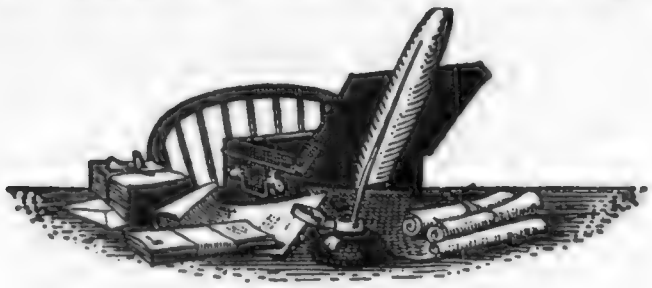

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LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

Edited by HUGH KINGSMILL

HILAIRE BELLOC

AMONG the fifty-four essays collected* by J. B. Morton, the most devoted and the most richly gifted of Hilaire Belloc's disciples, there are two, on *King Lear* and on Milton, which anyone trying to bring some order into his thoughts about Mr. Belloc should find particularly helpful.

Roman Catholic propaganda has been Hilaire Belloc's chief occupation in his later years, and it is from the standpoint of its possible use to Roman Catholicism that Belloc considers *King Lear*. His argument is as follows. Christendom, broken into pieces by the Reformation, must be put together again, and to effect this it is necessary to explain one national soul to another. By constantly reading Racine, and by associating with those who understand what Racine is, an Englishman will at last see into the soul of Gaul. Conversely, to present England to the French intelligence, one may choose *King Lear*, which is thoroughly English in its formlessness, its immense vitality, its half-knowledge of unknowable things, its rush of air, as of a storm on an English upland, and its sudden silence at the end.

Propaganda written by a poet must be fantastic, for a poet cannot keep reality out, and the reality he admits will clash with the unreality he is trying to impose on the reader. In this essay Belloc, the poet, feels and communicates the storm in Shakespeare's soul imaged in the storm on the heath and in the conflicting passions of the characters in the play. But Belloc, the institutionalist, is not concerned with the storm in Shakespeare's soul, with the heaven and hell which each man bears within himself. He is concerned with the welfare of the church to whose authority he bows in accordance with his view that "all the wisest men have accepted a received answer from authority external to themselves". To an institutionalist nations are much more important than individuals, and so Belloc excogitates this scheme of steeping Frenchmen in Shakespeare and Englishmen in Racine as a preliminary step to bringing England and France back within the Roman fold. Urged in his firm and weighty style, the scheme has an air of meaning something; but it will not bear much analysis. It is improbable that, whatever mingled finesse and energy were employed, even as many as five thousand Englishmen could be worked up into a passionate love of, say, *Phèdre*, or the same number of Frenchmen be kindled with a fiery enthusiasm for *King Lear*. Let us however, suppose, these two tasks accomplished. What then? Is there anything either in *King Lear* or in *Phèdre* to propel its readers along the path to Rome? And if there were, is there any reason to believe that a group of Phèdrists in England and a Learist group in France would in any measurable degree help to bring their respective countries once more beneath the triple tiara?

Perhaps because of its shortness, there is no trace in this essay of the cynicism with which Belloc so often makes nonsense of his argument, the poet in him

* Selected Essays of Hilaire Belloc. Edited with an introduction by J. B. Morton. *Methuen.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

suddenly interrupting the propagandist with an almost audible—"What rubbish this is! I'll say so." In illustrating this trait I shall confine myself, for the sake of brevity, to his monograph on William the Conqueror. Part of Belloc's case for Latin Christendom is that its statesmen and soldiers are free from the cunning and ambition which characterize great men of action born beyond the Mediterranean periphery. The talents of intrigue, Belloc writes, were not present in Napoleon; and Mussolini, with whom he once had a talk, impressed him as interested in his job, not in his name. Treating the Normans as honorary Latins, he contrasts William the Conqueror, who had no conception of right based upon force, with Godwin and his sons, who, tainted by Scandinavian influences, were utterly without scruple, piratical and evil. William the Latin Christian, who does not "conquer" England in the modern sense, but, finding himself there, is "blessed in the ordeal of battle", and Harold the Nordic crook, who sickens Christendom by seizing the English throne which William was expecting to mount with Harold's loyal help—that is Belloc's argument; and he does not help it by the merry suggestion that one of Godwin's evil Scandinavian connections was "reputed (I think falsely) to be descended from a Bear", or by giving as the impulse behind the Norman Conquest the prospect of "petty loot and spoil for the lesser men, rewards in land for their leaders, increase of wealth for all".

It is in Belloc's treatment of Milton that his divided nature, due perhaps to racial admixture, is most evident. In order to dispose of Milton as a great Protestant figure, Belloc wrote a book some years ago presenting Milton as an undersexed moneylender who used his financial stranglehold on a Cavalier family to procure himself, in spite of his dismal unattractiveness, a pretty bride. The Milton of his essay is, except in one particular, an idealized picture of himself, his humour, of course, omitted. He praises above all Milton's landscape, but he also approves him for disdaining intensity of grief, and for standing somewhat apart from other men, "as though he desired but little friendship and was not broken by one broken love and contemplated God and the fate of his own soul in a lonely manner". In all this Belloc is delineating his own nature and destiny, and separates himself from Milton only at the close—"Of all the things he drew the thing he could never draw was a collectivity." It is true that Milton never accepted his religious beliefs from an external authority, and was to that extent an anti-collectivist, but he became a savage partisan of the Puritan revolutionaries. The Commonwealth was to him what Rome has been to Belloc, and in its service he wasted his genius, fed his hatreds and embittered his personal life. Too great for cynicism, he was not too great for revenge, and the pure dawn of *L'Allegro* led on to the bloody sunset of Samson's holocaust.

The broken love in Belloc's life is glanced at several times in his work and is narrated in *The Four Men* through one of his mouthpieces, Grizzlebeard. In his youth (Grizzlebeard says) he loved a woman older than himself, a wealthy orphan with a title and an ancient country seat. Returning from his service in a foreign army, he learnt that she had recently married—"A veil was torn right off the face of the world and my own spirit, and I saw reality all bare, original, evil and instinct

with death . . . I had fallen in those moments from an immeasurable height." Calling on her the next day, he noted certain defects he had previously overlooked —"Her skin . . . was mottled with patches of dead-white. Her teeth were various; I am no judge whether they were true or false . . . her gestures were sometimes vulgar; her conversation was inane"; and, on the whole, he preferred her husband, a manufacturer of rectified lard.

The blow, it seems clear, was rather to Belloc's self-confidence than to his heart. She had embodied his mundane desires, and his failure with her prefigured and perhaps helped to bring about his later failure to make a great career in the political world. It affected him also as a writer. A natural solitary, he became after this disillusionment increasingly shut off from others. He has praised "laughter and the love of friends"; he has celebrated beer and good company; he has championed a faith which, if one goes back far enough, is found to be based on love and compassion. Yet even in his best work, poetic or humorous, he is, in spirit if not literally, always alone; no companion being present to the reader's mind even in such an uproarious outburst of inspired nonsense as the song in which he complains that all the animals, from the dog and the cat to the "lion of Africa, verily he," have hides all covered with hair.

His source of inspiration has been the beauty of the visible world, image of a divine reality which receded with the years—"In very early youth the soul can still remember its immortal habitation, and clouds and the edges of hills are of another kind from ours, and every scent and colour has a savour of Paradise." As he grew older he turned to the sea for consolation—"The sea has taken me to itself whenever I sought it and given me relief from men. It has rendered remote the cares and wastes of the land." But the sense of loss and emptiness remained, and in an unfinished poem he speaks of "that outer place forlorn Which, like an infinite grey sea, surrounds With everlasting calm the land of human sounds". The night approaches, "and the stars are put out and the trees fail", but he prays that in the hour of dissolution he may recover the beauty of the world, "and fade In dreaming once again the dream of all things made".

HUGH KINGSMILL.

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RUSSIAN CHILD AND RUSSIAN WIFE. By Tanya Matthews. *Victor Gollancz Ltd.* 15*s. net.*

BY MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE

MRS. TANYA MATTHEWS is a Russian who married a British journalist in Moscow. In *Russian Child and Russian Wife* she describes her life in her native land up to the time that she left it for good in February, 1944. There is, for very understandable reasons, an enormous curiosity about ordinary everyday life in contemporary Russia. I do not believe that in all the vast literature which has been produced at different times to satisfy this curiosity, there is any more suitable or more readable volume than Mrs. Matthews's. The fact that her point of view is essentially non-political, that she writes of life in Russia without any purpose either to uphold or denigrate the Soviet régime, adds greatly to the book's value. Also, she writes extremely well—vividly, humorously and convincingly.

She was born into the Revolution, and grew up to take for granted the kind of society which developed out of it. As the socially ambitious here often seek to prove that they are of aristocratic descent, so, in Russia, Mrs. Matthews found it more prudent to describe herself as of humble origin. This is, of course, the same old snobbishness, only the other way round. She was, in any case, much more concerned with her own personal affairs and emotions than with the ideology which she, like every other Soviet citizen, was forced to assimilate, at any rate to the extent of a *Short Course of the History of the Communist Party*. At the time of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, for instance, and the outbreak of 1939-45 war, her predominant feeling was one of vague relief that a war which had broken out a long way away did not look like involving Russia. The "principles" involved left her cold, as, doubtless, they did most of her fellow-Russians. This refusal of human beings to react, as political writers say they should, and historians insist they do, is, on the whole, a highly encouraging circumstance. If they could ever be persuaded wholly to forget their private interests, the way would be clear for their total enslavement. Freedom rests, not so much on the Magna Carta, or the Bill of Rights, or any other such instrument, as on each individual man and woman's ineradicable and indomitable tendency to be interested in themselves and their own affairs.

Despite many sombre circumstances, Mrs. Matthews managed to maintain an unquenchable gaiety. The Russian sense of humour, with which she is heavily and delightfully dowered, provides the best defence, in the long run, against the Politburo. Friends and relatives got arrested and disappeared, and food was often, indeed usually, desperately short, but she managed none the less to have an interesting, and at times entertaining, life, on which she looks back without resentment and without bitterness. By the exercise of great persistence, she managed to get an education. Her passionate desire to become a film actress, however, was not realized.

It has been long apparent that, as things have turned out, the October Revolution has had much less effect in changing life in Russia than is often supposed. It is true that, on the whole, people have been less comfortable and worse fed than they were, and that the Soviet Secret Police are more numerous, efficient and ruthless than their Tzarist equivalent. The essential pattern of life, however, has largely been resumed; Mrs. Matthews's admirable description of life in a crowded Moscow tenement evokes much more Chekov and Turgenev and Goncharov, than the Communist Manifesto, or even that enormously selling but little read work, a *Short Course of the History of the Communist Party*.

As Mrs. Matthews points out, the Kremlin bosses are generally known as the Royal Family. They live, she writes, a remote, luxurious life about which the ordinary population know very little; "ride in bullet proof cars 363 days a year, and on the remaining 2 days appear at Lenin's marble tomb to be saluted by the passing multitude and receive the cheers of their obedient subjects". Mrs. Matthews makes the interesting point that already this new Russian nobility is developing a characteristic physiognomy—"broad and blank of face, wearing well-trimmed Politburo moustaches".

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Next in the hierarchy, she says, come the high-grade executives—a sort of Soviet *élite*, consisting of the directors of industries and agriculture and of propaganda. Such lesser nobility enjoy the same sort of privileges as the Royal Family, but on a smaller scale. Where the Royal Family have country estates, they have large flats. They drive about in large cars instead of bullet-proof limousines, and have access to a special shop which is well stocked with all their requirements. These special shops fix the hierarchical grades as does the family car in America. They are the outward and visible sign of inward and invisible merit in the eyes of the Party.

The next category Mrs. Matthews calls the "Pets"—"distinguished artists, ballet dancers, painters, writers, composers, poets, scientists, aviators, miners (who stopped being miners after they became distinguished and got Government jobs), women weavers (who also stopped weaving after they'd distinguished themselves)". These Pets, she says, are the cream of Soviet society, the people who have the fun—"the freedom to move about, to mix with the less successful of their kin, to live in decent apartments, to have small cars, not to bother about food and clothes (they have their closed stores, too)". The only snag is that, in the exercise of their talents, they are rigidly restricted to the current ideology, and have to be extremely careful not to get it wrong—"the poets praised in their verses strong and wise leaders, the writers portrayed 'new life of a new man', painters painted gay faces of tractor girls, with tractors and combines in the background, or leaders on white horses (portraits of Voroshilov and Budenny)". A Pet who makes the mistake of praising a writer who is out of favour, or slights one who has been taken to the Kremlin's bosom, soon loses all his advantages. As far as the Party Line is concerned, he has to be dead on centre all the time.

A most interesting part of Mrs. Matthews's book is her description of Moscow when it had been deserted by the upper Soviet classes, and was expected to fall to the Germans. So far as I know, no other first-hand description of the curious situation which prevailed at that time exists. The Kremlin was deserted; political education all came to an end, copies of a *Short Course of the History of the Communist Party* either cheerfully burnt or put aside, and anti-Fascist posters removed from the walls. Altogether, *Russian Child and Russian Wife* is a unique book, most readable and most charming, which deserves to be widely read. One page of it gives a better idea of the Soviet régime than those two ludicrous tomes of the Webbs put together, with the Dean of Canterbury's lucubrations thrown in for good measure.

EISENHOWER

CRUSADE IN EUROPE. By Dwight D. Eisenhower. *William Heinemann, Limited.* 25*s. net.*

BY J. F. C. FULLER

BECAUSE its author held a very exalted position, it does not necessarily follow that *Crusader in Europe* is, as it has been pronounced to be, "a great book". Nor does it follow that it is "one of the finest of soldier's narratives of all times"; for there have been many war memoirs excelling it since Villehardouin wrote his *Chronicle of the Fourth Crusade*, and Bernardo Diaz del Castillo his *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, Instead, it is a very simple and honest book, written by a simple and honest man, whose fame in history is more likely to be that of a great moderator than a great soldier.

To have held the balance between two such different types of peoples and armies as the American and British, led by two such different masters as President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill—the one knowing nothing of war and the other of nothing other than war—and to have smoothed out the differences between generals so different as Montgomery, Bradley and Patton, amounts to genius of a kind. This, then, is the first of the two great lessons of the book: the overwhelming importance of harmony between allies, and Eisenhower established it as fully as Marlborough and Eugene did in their day.

It was the search after harmony—which, seems to me to have directed Eisenhower's field strategy, and which was at the bottom of the most controversial argument in his book—namely, the clash between the broad and narrow front policies of the autumn of 1944.

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Napoleon was faced by a somewhat similar problem in September, 1806. Of it he wrote at the time: "My intention is to concentrate all my forces on my extreme right, leaving the space between the Rhine and Hamburg entirely empty, so that I may have nearly 200,000 men united on a single battle-field."

This, in principle, is what Montgomery wanted in September, 1944, and though in one place Eisenhower agrees that the best approach into Germany was by way of Montgomery's army on the extreme left, he set the narrow front proposal—which he inappropriately calls a "pencil-like thrust" —aside, because, as he says: "I firmly believe that the greatest possible concentration of troops should be effected on the great stretch between Switzerland and the North Sea." Then, in another place he writes: "This meant that, counting all types of divisions—infantry, armoured and airborne—we could, on the average, deploy less than one division to each ten miles of front." Well may it be asked, where then is the "greatest possible concentration?"

Eisenhower gives several cogent reasons against the narrow front, though all are open to argument; but he says nothing of the one reason which, I believe, throughout the war was always at the back of his head. It is that, had he agreed to switch the bulk of his petrol and supplies to Montgomery in the north or to Bradley in the centre, harmony within the allied army would have been disrupted, because the generals deprived of these commodities would have raised a most audible howl. Should this be so, then the allied army was not commanded by a general-in-chief, but instead by a posse of generals, who to be kept in order had to be fed on ration book lines. Whether, in the circumstances, this was a good or a bad thing, I must leave for history to decide.

The second great lesson of the book is also one of harmony; but in the strategical instead of the psychological field, and its failure may be traced directly to Eisenhower's position when the war broke out. He was then a lieutenant colonel, and even in February, 1943, when he became "a four-star general" he says: "I was still a lieutenant colonel in the Regular Army." As such, quite rightly, he insists that "political estimates are the function of governments, not of soldiers". But what he fails to see is that a commander-in-chief is something more than

a soldier; for he is the harmonizing link between policy and strategy, and if he is not, he is no more than a lieutenant colonel—a battalion commander.

At the Cairo Conference, Eisenhower is surprised to find that Mr. Churchill's views were coloured by "considerations that lay outside the scope of the immediate military problem"—namely, the future of the Balkans. And he adds: "For this concern I had great sympathy, but as a soldier I was particularly careful to exclude such considerations from my own recommendations." In fact, he not only completely failed to see, but was completely oblivious of the truth of Clausewitz's saying that "War is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse, with a mixture of other means," and that "The subordination of the military point of view to the political is therefore the only thing which is possible".

In spite of his masters being the Combined Chiefs of Staff and in spite of their masters being President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, who may or may not have known what they were doing, for a general-in-chief Eisenhower's lack of political instinct was phenomenal. When on 24th March, 1945, the Rhine was crossed, he was of opinion that the fate of Germany was sealed. As that was so, then his strategical problem was solved, and all that remained to be done was to attain the political end. That end was to occupy Berlin, and that is what Mr. Churchill and the British Chiefs of Staff wanted him to do. But the battalion commander within him revolted: it was not a military operation, because "to sustain a strong force at such a distance from our major bases along the Rhine would have meant the practical immobilization of units along the remainder of the front. This I felt to be more than unwise; it was stupid". Hence his creed:

"Because only by the utter destruction of the Axis was a decent world possible, the war became for me a crusade in the traditional sense of that often misused word." And what is the traditional sense? Sir Ernest Barker's opinion is that "The Crusades may be written down as a failure. They ended not in the occupation of the east by the Christian west, but by the conquest of the west by the Mohammedan east."

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FOUR COUNTRIES. William Plomer. *Cape*. 10*s*. 6*d*.

SONS OF NOAH. Negley Farson. *Gollancz*. 12*s*. 6*d*.

LOVERS AREN'T COMPANY. Monica Stirling. *Gollancz*. 8*s*. 6*d*.

THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH is a long novel set in twelfth century Champagne, and it is clearly the fruit of much historical research. It attempts to provide a realistic chronicle of everyday life among the smaller feudal barons, to discover the men and women behind the heraldic names and the stiff recumbent effigies frozen for posterity in a dignity which they may not have achieved in their lives.

Sequestered in their insanitary castles by poor communications, disdaining trade and often incapable of estate management, the lesser medieval baron had few material comforts and depended on loot or a lucky marriage to maintain his status. The Crusades provided these men with an escape from their debts, their petty feuds and their wives and an outlet for that militant Christianity which, however inadequately practised, was always sincerely believed. Their lurid vices, detailed with perhaps unnecessary repetition in this book, were not incompatible with an other-worldliness to which Miss Oldenbourg does not do full justice; the book is better described by its original French title *Argile*.

Gross and faulty clay they certainly are, these bloodthirsty, lecherous knights and their suffering but by no means blameless ladies. Miss Oldenbourg has certainly succeeded in bringing her people to life. The development of Ansiau and Alis from their marriage in childhood to their weary and disillusioned old age is much more than conventional, and in the very crowded canvas there are a number of figures endowed with equal individuality, particularly Herbert the Red, Ansiau's uncle, whose solitary death from wounds in the forest makes one of the most moving passages in a book which although violent and various in scene and action seems somehow deficient in high lights.

The World is Not Enough raises once more the question whether the realistic school of historical romance stimulates the imagination as much as the heroic. The most dramatic pages of this book are those in which the meteoric figure of Richard Cœur de Lion appears to energize the flagging Franks during the Third Crusade. These are pages of superb description showing an imaginative use of historical material which alone would make the book worth reading.

FROM the confusion, vice and disease rampant in the tents of the Crusaders to the state of affairs in modern Europe is not so far as it was in the days of Sir Walter Scott. Howard Randle, in *Randle in Springtime*, is hardly a modern version of the penurious knight who sold his sword and acquired loot in a plundered city. Randle was an insurance clerk in civil life who managed to get a commission during the war, but saw no active service and remained junior in rank. In civil life Randle was undoubtedly a decent creature, as the medieval knight probably was not, but the knight had a set of beliefs which in the last resort dictated his conduct and Randle has none. He is a product of mass education and confused propaganda, his code is what the people round him do and when he finds himself in an atmosphere of corruption like post-war Hamburg, he will slide. Geoffrey Cotterell is a brilliant reporter of social absurdities, a moralist who looks at life and not at the copy-book. Randle is discomfited, not because he slides from rectitude, but because he is not as clever as the crooks he is dealing with. This is a fast moving and most diverting novel which will add to Mr. Cotterell's growing reputation.

WILLIAM PLOMER'S *Four Countries* is a collection of short stories set in Africa, Japan, Greece and England. In his preface the author tells us that much of his early life was spent in strange places so that "when I returned to England I did not see it with the same eyes as if I had been there all the time". He does indeed turn on the English the same cool curiosity with which he surveys the demoralization of the African boy in the Johannesburg mines or the little Japanese servant girl engaged in her humble pursuit of happiness, but not quite the same sympathy. Subconsciously, perhaps, he sees us as exploiters, if only of each

other. He has a supple prose style and a vision of curious lucidity, he is one of the most accomplished contemporary painters of exotic scenes, sometimes reminding us of Huxley's early stories and travel sketches but without Huxley's occasionally intrusive patronage of his subjects.

IT is at once the merit and the demerit of Negley Farson that he can never accept anything. The spectacle of folly and corruption frets him continually, erupting in splenetic prose. *Sons of Noah* is ostensibly about a journalist who comes to a small fishing port on the New Jersey coast, where he becomes involved in the love affair of a young doctor and the daughter of the local courtesan. There is a lot of sentimentality in it, and a lot of diatribe against Mr. Farson's bedizened sweetheart, America, for not being the fresh and simple girl she used to be. But the superb descriptions of the coast, its wild life and its people and the writer's passionate championship of all that is best in the American tradition warm the heart and dispel criticism.

LOVERS AREN'T COMPANY is that rare thing, a romantic love story written without sentimentality or cynicism. It is a first novel by Monica Stirling, the daughter of the actor Edward Stirling, so well known in Paris and elsewhere and the writer's cosmopolitan background explains her accurate observation of different racial types. Her individual talent, however, goes much further than this, she has the born novelist's grip on her characters, the power of making you see them and feel with them, she can convey a scene, a mood and a way of life in a clear, economical prose. Few recent novels have had a more delightful heroine than Francesca, the young Italian widow who falls in love with a serious-minded French engineer, and the sad little story of her niece Vittoria's too early advance towards the experience of love is a moving commentary on one of the incidental tragedies of war. Set among the pressing problems of contemporary Europe, the book establishes once more that the real material of the novelist is the individual human heart.

RUBY MILLAR.

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Short Notices

AFTER LUNCH

THE BANQUET OF THE IMMORTALS. By Dr. James Hasson, with twenty-two illustrations, eleven in colour. *The Poseidon Press.* Limited Edition. £5 5*s.* 0*d.* net.

THE INTIMATE CHARM OF KENSINGTON. By Eric and Barbara Whelpton. Illustrated. *Ivor Nicholson and Watson.* 9*s.* 6*d. net.*

DR. HASSON, a French physician who lives in England, is the enviable possessor of a rare collection of paintings and *objets d'art*. He tells us that one day, after hanging his pictures and arranging his treasures in his recently acquired house, he enjoyed "a really excellent lunch and a bottle of very fine old Pommard". Whereupon he underwent an experience of a visionary character. The artists of his collection appeared at a banquet in his dining room and in turn discoursed upon their lives, their times and their works. The circumstances and the orations are fully recorded in his handsome and unusual book.

The *dramatis personæ* include Perugino, the Bellini, Tintoretto, Jeanne d'Arc, (by virtue of the presence in the collection of a ring reputed to have been worn by her), Isaac Sutton, Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard and Clodion. The standard of post-prandial oratory was remarkably high.

How far Dr. Hasson asks us seriously to accept the visionary nature of what he relates I cannot say, although the preface by Mr. Charles Richard Cammel, formerly associate-editor of *The Connoisseur*, seems to be explicit on the point. The author probably adopted this form in order to make more palatable the historical and other matter which he desired to communicate to his readers. If this assumption is correct, his enthusiasm and erudition are beyond doubt; his imagination vivid and his grasp of English most impressive. If it is not, then Dr. Hasson is a most competent reporter of psychic phenomena.

There are eleven tangible colour plates and an equal number of black and white reproductions in this luxurious volume, a sumptuous banquet of typography and blockmaking.

Mr. and Mrs. Whelpton's book is altogether a more modest affair. They set out, no doubt after a simple studio meal, to

draw attention to some of the many points of historical and architectural interest in the Royal Borough of Kensington in which they are obviously and justifiably pleased to live. It is an unassuming and discursive essay in local loyalty which should stimulate dwellers in Kensington to get out and savour their delectable borough before it is improved beyond recognition.

SYDNEY J. MAIDEN.

JACOBITISM

THE JACOBITE MOVEMENT: THE FIRST PHASE 1688-1716. By Sir Charles Petrie. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*. 15*s. net*.

THIS book, now reissued in an enlarged form, traces the history of Jacobitism as a continuous movement in British politics from its origins in ideas formulated before the Revolution of 1688. It is both witty and erudite, and it is based upon a considerable mass of original material much of which has been utilized for the first time in this edition. Its outstanding feature is perhaps the collection of character sketches which it contains, and of these that of the Old Pretender is probably the best.

The paradox of Jacobitism lies in the contrast between the strength of its supporters and its lack of positive achievement. So much so nearly happened that never did. If Dundee had not fallen at Killiecrankie, if Mar had not been so inept, if Berwick had led the "15", or even if Bolingbroke had had a different mistress at a critical moment, things might have been so very different. As it is, Sir Charles Petrie is left with his regrets, and his achievement is to have portrayed a noble and unsuccessful cause without ever allowing his treatment to be tainted by the sentimentality which has infested this subject like an odour of cheap scent.

"Well-meaning people here that abhor a Popish successor on the one hand, and a change of constitution on the other, are distracted." Here in fact is probably the simplest clue to this drama of the unexpected. My chief criticism of this book would in fact be that the inter-relations between Jacobitism and the Non-Juring movement in the Anglican Church are not here treated

FROM FATHER TO SON

We record with some pleasure that the number of families in which it is almost a tradition to bank with the Westminster grows with each succeeding generation. It would seem that young people find in the services of the Westminster Bank some quality which is especially attractive to them and this, we believe, may well be the knowledge that the Bank extends the same friendly welcome to all its customers, whether their accounts be large or small. The Manager of your local branch will be glad to tell you how the Westminster Bank can help those whose careers are just starting.

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in sufficient detail. The career of George Hickes (whose name does not appear in the index) might lead the author to some interesting reflections which could be embodied in the second volume of his attractive and important work.

DAVID DOUGLAS.

EMBASSY SUCCESSES

PEACE COMES TO PECKHAM. By R. E. Delderfield.

LET MY PEOPLE GO. By Ian Hay.

AWAY FROM IT ALL. By Val Gielgud.

Sampson Low, Marston and Co. 8*s.* 6*d.*

IT was Bernard Shaw who first made the reading of plays popular and I should like to see more plays published with stage directions such as he wrote; never superfluous and always integral parts of the literary content. Too often they are inconclusive notes by the author, with mechanics in technical jargon frequently added by the producer or stage manager. These cabalistic signs distract the reader's eye; in their place, even if it does include a lengthy preface, let us have descriptive passages of good English prose to supply the absent visual details.

The mechanics may have a value for the amateur and inexperienced professional but I fancy it a bad value; a blue-print of a production belongs only with the stage staff. Differing conditions of production demand new imagination and invention; move he ever so slavishly in imitation of John Gielgud, no other Hamlet is helped to be as good by knowing when Gielgud is D.L. or turns C. to exit U.L.

Here then are three plays of considerable and differing interest, linked by the fact that they first appeared at the most enterprising Embassy Theatre, Swiss Cottage. They all suffer from stage directions which are not even complete as blue-prints; for in one place appear the words "*as plan*" but there is not one plan included and property, stage and lighting plots are all missing, which makes them on the one hand less practical and on the other less readable than they deserve to be.

Cockney dialogue is, to me, tiresome to read but Mr. Delderfield is a master of his comedy types, technically adroit in plot construction and keeps the interest with an easy swinging story. In *Peace Comes to Peckham* he has probably sacrificed a big idea for a small one, but then a drawing of a gentian does not set out to be a painting of the mountain range on which it grew. Nevertheless, this may have contributed to its apparent failure in production.

Ian Hay dramatises the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin from birth almost to death with dramatic care and exquisite historical detail; but the many episodic scenes, well constructed and emotionally satisfying each by each, are like tiny one act plays. This combined with the host of characters tends to leave Harriet Beecher Stowe and the play somewhat swamped. It would be a great pity, however, if productions of this play are not attempted by those with the facilities.

Away From It All is well made, convincing and has a worthwhile idea in it. There are one or two small errors, no doubt, which I mention only because I can find no obvious big ones to account for it not having had the commercial success it seems to deserve. Maybe it came too soon after the war, or not soon enough? Maybe it was a wet week, or

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GILBEY'S GIN

a heat-wave? Maybe the idea was just too good or not handled strongly enough? In the theatre there are always excuses for plays failing, but this does not mean that the plays are failures. These three are not.

JOHN V. TREVOR.

MEMORIES OF FLANDERS AND FRANCE

A BELGIAN MANOR IN TWO WARS. By Charles d'Ydewalle. Translated by Eric Sutton. *Macmillan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

THIS very varied book constantly evokes pictures, whether the author introduces one or other of his interesting ancestors, a piece of his native landscape, General de Gaulle at Carlton House Terrace, King Albert walking with his friend Admiral Keyes in the grounds of Monsieur d'Ydewalle's cousin, an uncle throwing discarded suits on the side of the road for the poor to collect lest he humiliate them, or any of the many glimpses of Bruges. In "English Interlude" we have a delightful description of the English colony before 1914, when "an acquaintance with the English at Bruges was a liberal education . . . There was not a single boarding house without its regular *Tatler* and *Bystander* laid out on every table". A barber returning from a visit said "England is an island, and it is solely inhabited by English people. When quite small, even at four years old, they are already English".

Like nearly all old families in Belgium, the d'Ydewalles are largely of French ancestry. French is the language of the gentry, and the peasantry feel uncomfortable if they hear them speaking Flemish. The author touches on the struggle between the Clauwaerts, the patriots of the great Flemish cities of the fourteenth century, and the Leliaerts, friends of the Lilies of France, which culminated in the Battle of the Golden Spurs, when the flower of French chivalry fell to the citizens led by a butcher and a weaver.

After pictures of de Gaulle and his staff in London we have a graphic account, "Hautecloque (General Leclerc) Rides," of the liberation of France in which the author was the first uniformed journalist to enter Paris. The book concludes with a touching picture of the author's return to Bruges and his ancestral home.

BRIAN LUNN.

THREE WORRIED WRITERS

WHY DO I WRITE? An Exchange of Views between Elizabeth Bowen, Graham Greene and V. S. Pritchett. With a Preface by V. S. Pritchett. *Percival Marshall.* 6*s.*

HERE is a three-cornered correspondence on that old chestnut, *The Artist and Society*. The three writers are representative of a generation which is all too conscious that it finds itself cut off on a sandbank of Liberalism, with the tide rising, to all appearances, unpleasantly fast. As novelists, they are concerned with the complexities, contradictions, and imperfections of human nature and personal relationships, but they are aware of the challenge of forces in our world which would seem to demand the sacrifice of these very complexities in the name of human nature's temporal, or even its extra-temporal salvation. Mr. Pritchett's Puritan conscience prompts him to ask the awkward question. Miss Bowen, heir of a long tradition of civility, realizes that the security which it gave her is no longer to be counted upon. For Mr. Greene the situation is rather more complex, since, for him, liberal humanism can no longer be an all-embracing premise. He owes his allegiance to a Church, many of whose leaders have quite definite ideas as to the limits of what is permissible to the artist's expression, limits which the artistic imagination itself knows nothing of. This leads him to stress the importance of what he terms the artist's "disloyalty", and to attack the problem at a somewhat deeper level than his two companions. For on the whole one cannot feel that these three writers have more than scratched the surface. The novel is the least pure and the least permanent of art-forms. For a poet, say, or a philospher, the questions would, I suspect, have been differently framed: not "Why do I write?" but "How *shall* I write?" in these unpropitious times. It would have been better, perhaps, for these three distinguished people, if they had not felt compelled to take time off from creative writing to produce this book. I am reminded of the mottoes which Professor Toynbee has placed on the title page of each of the volumes of his *Study of History*—Virgil's "*Nox ruit, Ænea*", and the Gospel's injunction, "Work while it is day".

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS.

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